



PAGE 34
**HITLER
CONS
STALIN**



PAGE 64
**THE CASE OF
CUSTER'S
LOST SCOUT**



PAGE 41
**3 INTERACTIVE
COMBAT
MISSIONS**

ARMCHAIR

GENERAL



**BEST POW
DVDs**
PAGE 96



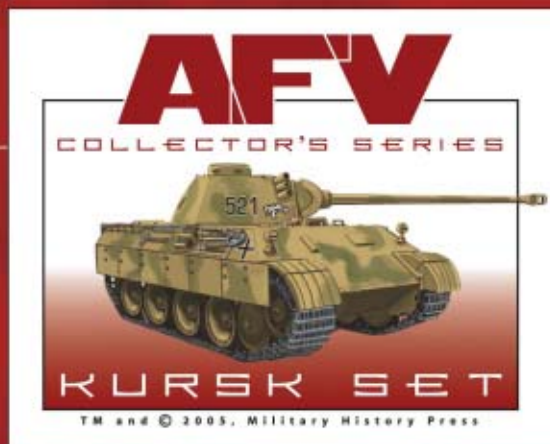
BATTLE FOR BERLIN

HOW ZHUKOV GOT THERE FIRST

July 13, 1945. While standing at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, Russian Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky, British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, and Russian Marshal Georgi Zhukov celebrate the Allied victory over Nazi Germany.

**BONUS
GAME
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PAGE 45

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Tiger I

1st SS Panzer Regiment



Tiger I

3rd SS Panzer Regiment



Tiger I

2nd SS Panzer Regiment



Tiger I

503rd Heavy Tank Battalion
with tank commander



Panther D

Two-color field camouflage



Panther D

Standard factory color



Panther D

Three-color "ambush"
camouflage



T-34/76

Medium green with
tactical insignia



T-34/76

Two-color field camouflage



T-34/76

Early olive green color



Mark III J

Three-color camouflage



Mark III J

Field expedient
camouflage



Mark III J

Winter whitewash



Su-122

self-propelled gun
Two-color field camouflage



Su-122

Early olive green color



Su-122

Medium green with
tactical number



Nashorn

Two-color camouflage
Crew in panzertruppen black



Nashorn ("Rhinceros")

Standard factory color
Crew in panzertruppen black



Nashorn

Winter whitewash
Crew in feld-grau (green)



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ALONE IN A CROWD: Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower speaks with paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division as they prepare to jump into Normandy. Ike alone bore the heavy burden of being the only man who could launch the greatest invasion in history – D-Day, the Allied attack on Hitler's Fortress Europe.

CONTENTS

VOLUME III ISSUE 2

p. 38



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

SPECIAL FEATURES

10 QUESTIONS

10 General Roméo Dallaire

Retired General Roméo Dallaire answers our questions with his compelling eyewitness testimony about the tragic 1994 slaughter of 800,000 ethnic Tutsis by rival Hutus. Why couldn't the U.N. prevent the Rwandan genocide ... and what does it mean for OUR future?

HISTORY'S MYSTERIES

34 The Mystery of Stalin's Barbarossa Surprise

It seemed that Stalin trusted no one – not even his own officers. So why, then, did Russia's paranoid "man of steel" believe one of Hitler's biggest lies? *By Jerry D. Morelock*

BATTLEFIELD DETECTIVE

64 The Case of Custer's Lost Scout

Dedicated sleuths use all the tools of modern forensic archaeology to solve a 130-year-old "murder mystery." *By Douglas D. Scott*

FEATURES

ICS (INTERACTIVE COMBAT STORY)

Cold Steel and Iron Courage: Part 2

56 Cavalry in the Valley

The second installment of our new American Civil War series! Take command in this exciting cavalry raid as thundering hoofbeats echo through Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. *By John Antal*

BATTLEFIELD LEADER

72 General Moussa Peled: Savior of the Golan Heights

With Israel's very existence threatened, one man stepped forward to help save his nation. *By Abraham Rabinovich*

WALK WHERE THEY FOUGHT

80 Storming Hitler's Lair: Berlin, 1945

March with the Red Army as it captures World War II's greatest prize – the Nazi capital! *By Richard Armstrong*



ON THE COVER

Zhukov:
Berlin's
Conqueror

HULTON-DEUTSCH
COLLECTION/
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April/May 06

Lt. Col. George A. Custer's famous battle and his demise on the banks of the Little Bighorn River gave rise to a number of mysteries, not the least of which is *What happened to his scout, Mitch Boyer?*

DEPARTMENTS

4 PUBLISHER'S NOTE

6 EDITOR'S LETTER

8 MAILBAG

13 RALPH PETERS' CRISIS WATCH

Our exclusive new column brings you the "inside stories" and expert analysis on the world's trouble spots that you won't see in the media!

14 DISPATCHES

Real heroes of the War on Terrorism, Korean War Medal of Honor, cool gear and more!

COMMANDER DOSSIER

24 General Vo Nguyen Giap

How a former history teacher became one of the 20th century's most successful commanders.

WEAPON FILES

26 AK-47 Assault Rifle

The "poor man's" weapon of choice.

WAR COLLEGE

28 The Principles of War Revisited: Mass

Today's precision technologies dictate a change to an outdated doctrine.

HOW THEY FOUGHT

30 Towton: 1461

England's War of the Roses was anything but rosy!

COMMAND DECISIONS

38 Ike's D-Day Decision

As Ike wrestled with his toughest decision of the war, the fate of history's greatest invasion hung in the balance.

COMBAT!

41 Capture a "Bridge Too Far"

Choose the correct course of action as German panzergrenadiers battle British Red Devils at Arnhem, 1944.

YOU COMMAND

46 Chinese Farm, 1973

Test your decision-making skills as an Israeli commander during the Yom Kippur War.

ACG INTERACTIVE

p.41

Take command in *Armchair General's* interactive battles where YOU make the decisions!

COMBAT!
YOU COMMAND
YOU COMMAND SOLUTION
INTERACTIVE COMBAT STORY

YOU COMMAND SOLUTION

52 Guadalcanal

Historical outcome and winning Reader Solutions to CDG #12, January 2006 issue.

WITNESS TO WAR

88 Massacre at Bagniez Crossroads

How one man survived the Battle of the Bulge's most infamous incident.

90 GAME BUZZ

So many games, so little time. A sneak peek at 10 new releases!

92 VIDEO GAME REVIEW

Ghost Recon 2: Summit Strike and *Rainbow Six: Lockdown*

Games you won't want to miss!

94 WARGAME REVIEW

Age of Empires III and *Civilization IV*

Stats on two fun and challenging wargames.

DVD LIBRARY

96 Inside the Wire: 11 Best POW DVDs

Find out which DVDs best capture the prisoner of war experience.

BOOKSHELF

98 War, Up Close and Personal

Two new must-have books transport readers directly to the front lines.

PARTING SHOT

100 The King Visits the "Front"

p. 64



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www.armchairgeneral.com

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Best of the Best!

ACG proudly announces the establishment of an Advisory Board of noted warriors and scholars.

We were thrilled that the *Chicago Tribune* selected *Armchair General* as one of their "50 Best" magazines for 2005.

At number 25, ACG was the list's only military history magazine. Since we had then published only seven issues, this honor might seem to some a good excuse to rest on our laurels. Yet "business as usual" is definitely *not* what ACG is all about.

To ensure ACG remains innovative and exciting, we've recruited an Advisory Board representing an outstanding group of experts from military history's many areas of interest. Here's a brief introduction of our board members:

General (Ret) Harold G. "Hal" Moore is a true American warrior-hero and one of the finest leaders of character this country has ever produced. His outstanding book, *We Were Soldiers Once ... And Young*, written with reporter Joe Galloway, is the classic account of young men in desperate combat with a determined and deadly enemy. It is truly an honor to welcome Hal to our Advisory Board.

Carlo D'Este, renowned World War II historian and best-selling author of *Patton: A Genius for War* and *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life*, is ACG's Consulting Historian. He also writes a popular and insightful monthly article for our website.

James Lighthizer is president of the Civil War Preservation Trust, the national organization leading the fight to protect our threatened Civil War battlefields and prevent uncontrolled "development" from stealing our heritage.

Brigadier General (Ret) John W. "Jack" Mountcastle, Ph.D., a highly decorated combat veteran and the epitome of the "Soldier-scholar," was formerly Chief of Military History and commander of the U.S. Army's Center of Military History in Washington, D.C.

Ralph Peters, a retired U.S. Army Intelligence officer with first-hand experience in over 60 countries, is the author of *New Glory: Ex-*



Advisory board member Ben Weider with his son, *Armchair General* publisher, Eric Weider, at the ceremony appointing the elder Weider Honorary Colonel of Canada's 62d Artillery Regiment.

panding America's Global Supremacy and 19 other books. An acclaimed columnist and strategist, he appears frequently as an expert commentator in broadcast media.

John Rose is an exceptional research historian who has extensively studied the history of America's fluid and transformational frontier era. His forte is the strategic and military implications of the Apache Wars.

Barnet Schecter, a Yale-educated scholar and noted historian, specializes in military history related to New York City. He is the author of *The Devil's Own Work: The Civil War Draft Riots and the Fight to Reconstruct America* and *The Battle for New York: The City at the Heart of the American Revolution*.

Douglas D. Scott, Ph.D., is a widely recognized authority on military archaeology and a frequent commentator in broadcast media. His books include *Archeological Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Bighorn* and *They Died With Custer: Soldiers' Bones From*

the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Ben Weider, C.M., C.Q., Ph.D., Canadian international entrepreneur, is the founder and president of the International Napoleonic Society and one of the world's foremost authorities on the military genius who invented modern warfare. His books include *Napoleon: The Man Who Shaped Europe* and *The Murder of Napoleon* – the latter presents conclusive evidence that the emperor was the victim of arsenic poisoning. And Ben is my father!

William H. "Wild Bill" Wilder is a popular wargame designer. He has extensive experience in scenario design and game development and has worked with seven gaming companies over the past 11 years.

Armchair General welcomes this distinguished group of scholars and experts whose sage advice will help us continue to make ACG the finest military history publication in the world. ★

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EDITOR'S LETTER

"Well, There You Go Again"

Today's reporting on Iraq – it's déjà vu all over again.

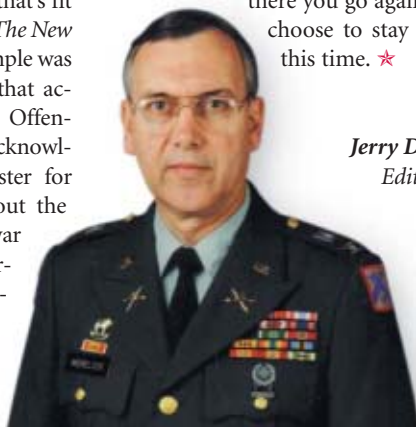
When Ronald Reagan zapped his challenger during a presidential election debate with his "there you go again" quip, it brought down the house. Meant to chide his opponents for their inability to achieve a psychological break with the failed, flawed policies of the past, the phrase rapidly became part of popular jargon.

However, a recent book by Marine Corps "Viet Vet" Mark W. Woodruff brings that expression to mind with a new, sober meaning given today's less-than-comprehensive media reporting from Iraq and the carping political opposition to the ongoing War on Terrorism. *Unheralded Victory: The Defeat of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army, 1961-1973* documents the Big Story the mainstream media tragically missed during the American war in Vietnam. That is, by the time the last U.S. ground combat unit was withdrawn from the Republic of Vietnam in August 1972, the Viet Cong had long been annihilated and the North Vietnamese Army had been soundly defeated. Even the NVA's all-out 1972 Easter Offensive – timed by Hanoi to take advantage of the U.S. draw-down – was a bloody failure.

Yet as Woodruff demonstrates, little if any of this "good news" story made headlines back in the States. Instead, Americans received a barrage of "all the bad news that's fit to print" (to paraphrase the motto of *The New York Times*). The most notorious example was the shoddy, sensationalist reporting that accompanied Hanoi's unsuccessful Tet Offensive of 1968. While now universally acknowledged that Tet was a military disaster for North Vietnam – virtually wiping out the Viet Cong for the remainder of the war – at the time, the American and international media turned it into a politi-

cal victory for the Hanoi regime. Woodruff writes, "Most of the Saigon-based journalists, stunned and confused at their first up-close and personal view of combat, quickly declared the Tet Offensive a Communist victory even before the smoke had cleared. Cooler, more reasoned appraisals assessed it differently: a total catastrophe for the Viet Cong. Even General Giap himself privately conceded that it had been a staggering military defeat." Unfortunately, the Tet coverage was only the most egregious example.

Sadly, the media's "Vietnam syndrome" seems to have resurfaced, although reporters and critics are quick to preface their constant condemnation of the War on Terrorism with the obligatory, "but we support the troops." With the stakes today even higher than they were in Vietnam, one can only hope that U.S. political leadership and the American people will see through the "there you go again" crowd and choose to stay the course – this time. ★



*Jerry D. Morelock is
Editor in Chief of
ARMCHAIR
GENERAL.*

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Conflicts of Interest



Soldier of the Century

The “Douglas MacArthur: Soldier of the Century” article (*Battlefield Leader*, November 2005) generated numerous responses from readers across the globe – the vast majority of which were *pro*-MacArthur. Here are some excerpts:

I have a message to those who delight in mocking MacArthur as “Dugout Doug.” Thanks to his unsurpassed economy of battle casualties, hundreds of thousands of young American Soldiers survived the war, headed home to their loved ones and helped re-

build the country. Three of them went on to become presidents of the United States.

Enjoyed your article. Great job, Col. Morelock.

ALVIN B. ORSLAND
IWO JIMA SURVIVOR
H CO., 3D BN., 26TH MARINE REGT.
5TH MARINE DIV.

Had the Soldiers who derisively called him “Dugout Doug” understood MacArthur’s strategy of “hitting ‘em where they ain’t,” they would have appreciated the fact that his war effort delivered the lowest casualty list in World War II. Their chances of surviving the war would have been greater than with any other commander. MacArthur’s kill

ratio was 10 dead Japanese for every American.

STUART LERVICK
STANWOOD, WASH.

Thanks for correcting several myths critical of MacArthur. One that is constantly used by his detractors is the disastrous Japanese air attack on Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines



several hours after Pearl Harbor. As you pointed out, his air chief, Lt. Gen. Lewis Brereton, was largely responsible for allowing 17 B-17s to be destroyed on the ground.

ALEX ODELL
MOUNT VERNON, WASH.

Your sweeping commentary on MacArthur was simply superb and evenhanded, a rare treat, capturing the true essence of this great American hero and debunking conventional wisdom unfairly critical of the “Soldier of the Century.”

MO LUDAN
BURLINGTON, WASH.

Quick Takes

Great magazine. The November issue is my first, and definitely will not be my last.

DENNIS ECKEL

I have been reading your magazines for about six months. They help me so much in learning strategy and they also teach me history.

TRAVIS EDWARDS

Man, I wasted a subscription to [a competitor's] magazine when I should have been investing in your great magazine. *Armchair General* has it all – history, details on weapons, points of view on command decisions, excellent photographs and fine maps. I will certainly be renewing my subscription.

“WILD BILL” WILDER

I had a two-hour wait for a plane and a one-hour flight, so I looked for a magazine to read. Passing all the “usuals” about finance, cars, etc., I came across *Armchair General*. It not only entertained me during the wait and flight, I still go back to it. I plan to subscribe.

DENNIS NEAL

Battleships Redux

Some of our eagle-eyed readers (Joe L. Brown Jr.; Michael D. Jackson; Tony Bass; Sgt. 1st Class Dennis K. Repke; and Wayne R. Trovinger) noted that the USS *North Carolina* was missing in action from the “Historic Battleships” item in our January 2006 *Dispatches*. Our Images Editor, Zachary Bathon, visited the dock in Wilmington, N.C., and sent in this picture of him standing in front of the battleship while holding that issue.



ACG's Zachary Bathon in front of the USS *North Carolina*.

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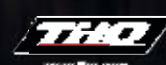
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10 QUESTIONS

General Roméo Dallaire

Now a senator in the Canadian Parliament, retired General Roméo Dallaire answers our questions with his compelling eyewitness testimony about one of the world's most horrific human tragedies – the 1994 slaughter of 800,000 ethnic Tutsis by rival Hutus. Why couldn't the U.N. prevent this genocide ... and what does it mean for OUR future? Read on.

ACG What was your reaction on June 27-28, 1993, when General Armand Roy, the Military Area Commander for Quebec, notified you that you had been selected to lead the U.N. Peacekeeping Force in Rwanda?

GEN. DALLAIRE: I confess that when General Roy called, I didn't know where Rwanda was or exactly what kind of trouble the country was in. The next day, he told me more about the tiny, heavily populated African nation. Rwanda was in the midst of negotiating a peace agreement to end a vicious two-and-a-half-year civil war between a rebel force – the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) – and the government. ... While the parties negotiated the terms of a peace agreement in Arusha, Tanzania, the U.N. had been asked by the president of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, to send in a small force to monitor the border to ensure that weapons and soldiers were not crossing from Uganda to Rwanda to reinforce the RPF. This was to be my mission, dubbed the United Nations Observer Mission to Uganda and Rwanda, or UNOMUR. (The name was later changed to UNAMIR – the U.N. Assistance Mission for Rwanda.) General Roy described it as a clas-

sic peacekeeping operation, a confidence-building exercise designed to encourage the belligerents to get down to the serious business of peace. ... I decided that this was my chance to learn firsthand what would work in the changing nature of conflict in the post-Cold War world.

ACG What was your impression of Rwanda when you arrived, and what initial difficulties did you encounter?

GEN. DALLAIRE: We landed in the Rwandan capital, Kigali, on August 19, 1993. From the first moment I glimpsed its soft, mist-covered mountains, I loved Rwanda. ... Rwanda seemed to me then a kind of Garden of Eden. Not that there was much time to appreciate its beauties; from the moment the plane touched down, I was caught up in a flurry of diplomatic activity. From the runway, I stepped into my first press conference, which was well attended by the local and international media. ... We set up a temporary headquarters in a meeting room in the Hotel des Mille Collines, but we were plagued with logistical problems, and I fumed about the amount of time we were wasting just getting ourselves set up. ... Already, administrative problems and shortages were consuming our limited time and attention.

ACG Your small U.N. peacekeeping force was completely multinational and mostly from developing nations, containing contingents from Tunisia, Belgium, Ghana, Bangladesh and elsewhere. What special problems did this situation present to you?

GEN. DALLAIRE: U.N. force commanders ... depended on the generosity of donor nations for both troops and equipment. There were never any guarantees on the quality or quantity of either. The best one could hope for was to attract the attention of a NATO member with deep pockets, and [early on] only Belgium had volunteered. ... The rest of the respondents came from several developing nations on three continents, and

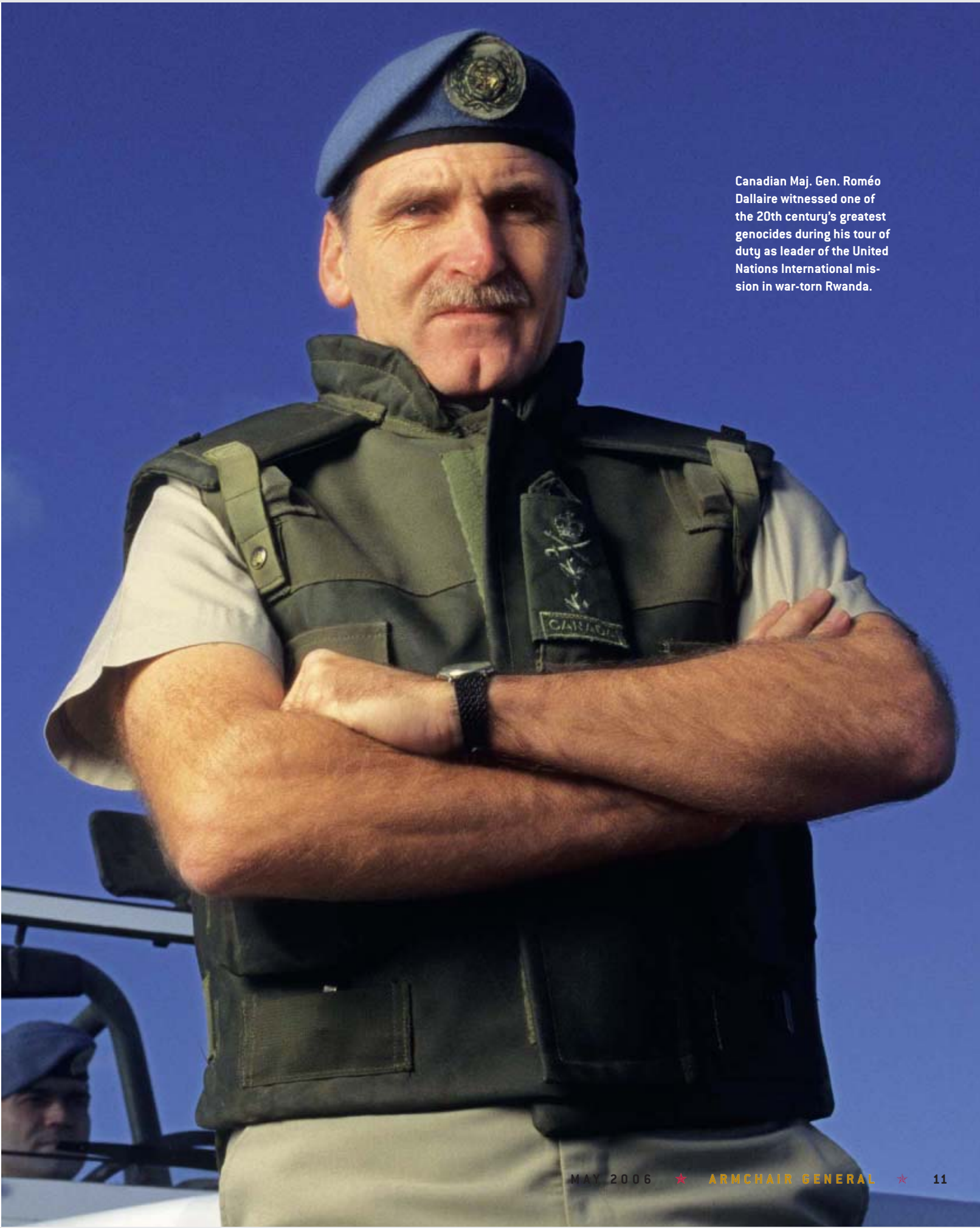
these troops had limited equipment capabilities and serious inherent logistic and financial problems. ... The slowly growing list of countries who were prepared to commit to a Rwandan mission came from a new generation of troop-contributing nations, who had large and untapped pools of soldiers but who were nearly completely deficient in materiel, sustainability and training specific to complex conflicts and vast humanitarian catastrophes.

ACG You've been critical of both the U.N. and the major world powers and are quoted as saying, "You can't just 'Pontius Pilate' 800,000 people." In your opinion, what was the main reason the U.N. was ineffective at preventing the Rwandan genocide?

GEN. DALLAIRE: The international community, of which the U.N. is only a symbol, failed to move beyond self-interest for the sake of Rwanda. While most nations agreed that something should be done, they all had an excuse why they should not be the ones to do it. As a result, the U.N. was denied the political will and material means to prevent the tragedy. ... We have fallen back on the yardstick of national self-interest to measure which portions of the planet we allow ourselves to be concerned about. In the 21st century, we cannot afford to tolerate a single failed state ruled by ruthless and self-serving dictators arming and brainwashing a generation of potential warriors to export mayhem and terror around the world.

ACG What, then, can the U.N. do to learn from the bitter lessons of Rwanda and become a more effective organization for helping the cause of world peace?

GEN. DALLAIRE: Though I can criticize the effectiveness of the U.N., the only solution to this unacceptable apathy and selective attention is a revitalized and reformed international institution charged with maintaining the world's peace and security, supported by the international community and guided by the founding principles of its



Canadian Maj. Gen. Roméo Dallaire witnessed one of the 20th century's greatest genocides during his tour of duty as leader of the United Nations International mission in war-torn Rwanda.

“It is time to tell the story from where I stood – literally in the middle of the slaughter for weeks on end.”

Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The U.N. must undergo a renaissance if it is to be involved in conflict resolution. This is not limited to the Secretariat, its administration and bureaucrats, but must encompass the member nations, who need to rethink their roles and recommit to a renewal of purpose. Otherwise, the hope that we will ever truly enter an age of humanity will die as the U.N. continues to decline into irrelevance.

ACG What do you consider the main “missing ingredient” that was necessary in order to create a formula to prevent the deteriorating situation in Rwanda from turning into genocide?

GEN. DALLAIRE: I truly believe the missing piece in the puzzle was the political will from France and the United States to make the Arusha accords work and ultimately move this imploding nation toward democracy and lasting peace. There is no doubt that those two countries possessed the solution to the Rwandan crisis. Let there be no doubt: The Rwandan genocide was the ultimate responsibility of those Rwandans who planned, ordered, supervised and eventually conducted it. [But] in line when it comes to responsibility are France, which moved in too late and ended up protecting the genocidaires and permanently destabilizing the region, and the U.S. government, which actively worked against an effective UNAMIR and only got involved to aid the same Hutu refugee population and the genocidaires, leaving the genocide survivors to flounder and suffer.

ACG Do you think the tragedy in Rwanda taught the major powers a lesson they will heed in order to prevent another such situation from arising?

GEN. DALLAIRE: Are there any signs that we are prepared to take the higher road in international human relations? Not many. Look at the conflict that has engulfed the whole Great Lakes region of central Africa since the genocide. ... From the Rwandan exodus in 1994 until genocide broke out once again in 2003, it has been estimated that 4 million human beings have died in the Congo and Great Lakes region, and until very recently the world did nothing except to send an undermanned and poorly resourced

peacekeeping mission. ... In the last decades of the 20th century, self-interest, sovereignty and taking care of number one became the primary criteria for any serious provision of support or resources to the globe's trouble spots. If the country in question is of any possible strategic value to the world powers, then it seems that everything from covert operations to the outright use of overwhelming force is fair game. If it is not, indifference is the order of the day.

ACG Throughout your book, you often refer to actions and decisions that, in retrospect, you admit might have been done differently and possibly achieved a somewhat better outcome. It is exceedingly rare to find such self-criticism in an autobiographical account. Why are you so hard on yourself?

GEN. DALLAIRE: My own mea culpa is this: As the person charged with the military leadership of UNAMIR, I was unable to persuade the international community that this tiny, poor, overpopulated country and its people were worth saving from the horror of genocide – even when the measures needed for success were relatively small. ... My experience was in training Canadian peacekeepers to go into classic Cold War-style conflicts. I had never been in the field as a peacekeeper myself. I had no political expertise and no background or training in African affairs or maneuvering in the weeds of ethnic conflicts in which hate trumps reason. ... It is time to tell the story from where I stood – literally in the middle of the slaughter for weeks on end. A public account of my actions, my decisions, and my failings during that most terrible year may be a crucial missing link for those attempting to understand the tragedy both intellectually and in their hearts.

ACG You witnessed unbelievably horrible scenes of death in Rwanda. How did this terrible experience affect you personally, and how have you been able to cope with the vivid memories that must have shaken your personal beliefs?

GEN. DALLAIRE: I used work as the anodyne for the blame that was coming my way and to assuage my own guilt about the failings of the mission. ... I accepted all tasks and worked hard and foolishly – so hard and

so foolishly that in September 1998, four years after I had returned home, my mind and my body decided to give up. The final straw was my trip back to Africa earlier that year to testify at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The memories, the smells and the sense of evil returned with a vengeance. Within a year and a half, I was given a medical discharge from the army. I was suffering, like so many of the soldiers who had served with me in Rwanda, from an injury called post-traumatic stress disorder. ... After one of my many presentations following my return from Rwanda, a Canadian Forces padre asked me how, after all I had seen and experienced, I could still believe in God. I answered that I know there is a God because in Rwanda I shook hands with the devil. I have seen him, I have smelled him, and I have touched him. I know the devil exists, and therefore I know there is a God.

ACG You have stated that the 21st century must become the “Century of Humanity.” What are the implications of this?

GEN. DALLAIRE: Several times in my book I ask the question, “Are we all human, or are some more human than others?” Certainly, we in the developed world act in a way that suggests we believe that our lives are worth more than the lives of other citizens of the planet. ... The only conclusion I can reach is that we are in desperate need of a transfusion of humanity. If we believe that all humans are human, then how are we going to prove it? It can only be proved through our actions. Through the dollars we are prepared to expend to improve conditions in the Third World; through the time and energy we devote to solving devastating problems like AIDS; through the lives of our soldiers, which we are prepared to sacrifice for the sake of humanity. ... No matter how idealistic the aim sounds, this new century must become the Century of Humanity, when we as human beings rise above race, creed, color, religion and national self-interest and put the good of humanity above the good of our own tribe. ★



Shake Hands With the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda by Roméo Dallaire. This powerful and chilling eyewitness account is a highly recommended must-read!

RALPH PETERS' CRISIS WATCH

Emerging Hot Spots

ACG's exclusive new column brings you the "inside stories" and expert analysis on the world's trouble spots that you won't see in the media!

Love the Brits, but they blew it. Watch southern Iraq, where the British military's "light touch" peacekeeping ops allowed Shia extremists to build parallel power structures that have made Coalition forces all but irrelevant.

No question about it: Man for man, Brits in uniform are the equal of any soldiers in the world. But they fell prey to one of the oldest mistakes in the military book: In Basra and the surrounding region, they applied peacekeeping lessons learned in Northern Ireland. But what works in one peacemaking or peacekeeping effort doesn't necessarily transfer to a radically different cultural environment. With the best intentions in the world, the Brits "fought the last war."

Now their forces are struggling to control pervasive death squads, an Iraqi security apparatus controlled by Shia radicals (many of them pro-Iran) and local governments either on board with the extremist program or terrified to resist it.

With whopping bad judgment, a senior British officer recently chastised the U.S. military for too heavy-handed an approach in Iraq – even as the Brits were effectively turning over the south to anti-Western firebrands.

Crisis Watch bottom line: If Iraq still exists as a unified state a decade from now, the most backward and troublesome provinces won't be in the notorious Sunni Triangle, but in the Shia south where the Brits' light touch opened the door to Islamist heavies.

The New Burma Road: Watch China's engagement in Burma/Myanmar. *Armchair General* readers know the Burma theater was one of the cruelest in World War II, but who thinks about Burma today? There may be a passing headline about the continuing detention of Aung San Su Kyi, the courageous democracy advocate, but without oil reserves to attract the world's attention, the Burmese military junta pretty much gets a pass – despite massive human-rights violations.

What's happening under our noses is crucial to China's plans for regional hegemony – and its preparations for that hope-it-doesn't-happen future war with the USA. Even 10 years ago, I witnessed stun-

ning Chinese penetration while on a government mission to combat the heroin trade. In Mandalay, Chinese buyers had priced the Burmese out of the city's center; the (crumbling) Burma Road was choked with Chinese trucks ferrying goods between southern China and the Rangoon port; and Beijing's military had already established a listening post on the Bay of Bengal.

Why does it matter? Because the Indian Ocean is even more important to China's security than the Pacific: It's the route for the oil and gas that fuels China's economy. And Beijing grasps that the

distant theater is operationally the toughest for our military (logistics rule). In a crisis, Burma/Myanmar would provide a lifeline for southern China and a military base to confront U.S. regional deployments.

Meanwhile, the Chinese have convinced Burma's ruling generals that the Yankees are coming to overthrow their regime. As a result, the already-paranoid junta recently uprooted the entire government, forcing it hundreds of miles inland from Rangoon – transplanting tens of thousands of functionaries to an undeveloped jungle site where the government will further lose touch with global reality.

Crisis Watch bottom line: China is effectively colonizing the country – and gaining its first port that feeds into the crucial Indian Ocean theater. Future key player? India. If India aligns with the USA,

Burma/Myanmar won't help China much.

Watch for Chinese efforts to derail the accelerating relationship between Washington and New Delhi.

Could the day come when U.S. forces once again fight in Burmese jungles? ★



Ralph Peters is the author of "New Glory: Expanding America's Global Supremacy" and 19 other books. A retired Army officer and former enlisted man, Peters has firsthand experience in over 60 countries on six continents. His articles and columns have appeared in a wide range of newspapers, magazines and journals, and he is a frequent guest on the broadcast media.

The Indian Ocean is the route for the oil and gas that fuels China's economy, and Beijing grasps that the distant theater is operationally the toughest for our military.

DISPATCHES

END OF AN ERA

World War I Vets Pass Away

Recent news items from around the world noted the passing of several aged World War I veterans, reminding us that the end of an era is rapidly approaching. Veterans were especially hard hit during the last few months of 2005. Scotland's last surviving vet, Alfred Anderson (b. 1896), who served with the 5th Battalion, the Black Watch, died in a nursing home in Angus. The only remaining Canadian World War I vet who saw combat, Clarence "Clare" Laking (b. 1899), a field artillery private, died in a Toronto hospital. Australia's last Great War combat veteran also passed away. William Evan Allan (b. 1899) enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy when he was only 14 years old and served until 1918.

Fewer than 100 Great War veterans are still alive worldwide. Information about surviving vets, as well as those re-



October 25, 2005. The coffin of sailor William Evan Allan, the last Australian to fight in World War I, is pulled on a gun carriage by some of the 1,000 naval personnel involved in his state funeral at the Victorian Naval Base HMAS Cerberus.

cently deceased, can be found at <http://en.wikipedia.org>.

As a final salute to Alfred, Clare, William and their mates who passed on before them, ACG offers this closing refrain from Aussie composer Eric Bogle's *And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda*. The song was written after Bogle attended ANZAC Day, Australia's national day of remembrance. It

seems highly appropriate to the occasion:

But the band plays "Waltzing Matilda,"

And the old men still answer the call,

But as year follows year, more old men disappear,

Someday, no one will march there at all.

Rest in peace.



Good Reasons to Join the Society for Military History

Military historians, who too often find their category of historical interest slighted or even completely ignored by the major national historical organizations, are urged to consider joining the Society for Military History (SMH), a nationwide association entirely dedicated to their favorite subject. In addition to actively supporting the study of military history, Society members also enjoy two outstanding benefits – the quarterly *Journal of Military History*, and the opportunity to attend the Society's annual conference.

The *Journal* features meticulously researched, scholarly articles with extensive footnotes and presents the best, most comprehensive reviews of all the latest military history books. A typical issue of the *Journal* might have 60 reviews; therefore, by using them as a guide for judicious book purchases, one can save enough to cover the price of Society membership!

The Society's annual conference offers the chance to rub shoulders with some of the world's finest military historians. Also, numerous lectures and seminars are presented on a wide range of military history topics. An added bonus is

One of the Missing – Found

A body found frozen in a glacier near the top of Mount Mendel in Kings Canyon National Park was one of the 78,000 American servicemen listed as missing in action from World War II. U.S. Army Air Forces flight records had suggested that the remains were those of a crewman from an AT-7 navigational training plane that crashed on the glacier on November 8, 1942, although several planes went down in the same area in the 1930s and 1940s. National Park

Service Rangers and a military forensic expert laboriously chipped the body from the ice and turned it over to the Joint Prisoner of War Accounting Command (JPAC), the Department of Defense unit responsible for recovering and identifying missing military personnel.

JPAC identifies remains by examining clothing and any documents that might be found with the body, and by comparing dental records and X-rays. When possible, DNA testing is also conducted. On February 4,

JPAC identified the airman as Leo Mustonen, a 22-year-old Army pilot missing since 1942.

Today's procedures are even more advanced than the ones used several years ago to identify the remains of the Unknown Soldier of the Vietnam War, interred at Arlington National Cemetery in 1984. Bowing to pressure from the family of a missing-in-action U.S. Air Force pilot, the Clinton administration authorized the exhumation and testing of the body. Ever since the remains were positively identified in 1998, the tomb of the Unknown Soldier of the Vietnam War has been empty.

the Book Fair, during which dozens of sellers representing virtually all the major publishers of military history offer thousands of books to attendees, often at a substantial “conference discount.”

To find out more, visit armchairgeneral.com and follow the links. Support your favorite subject – join SMH today!

Starting Young



George Hageman
creating
his pod-
cast.

George Hageman, a 15-year-old high school student in Seattle, Washington, may be the youngest regular “broadcaster” of military history subjects in the country. Last September Hageman began a weekly iPod “podcast” about his favorite subject, military history, and thousands are tuning in. He peppers each 10- to 20-minute podcast with historical anecdotes, information on military technology, and significant events. The show has been downloaded in 40 countries worldwide. Those who’ve heard his podcasts say they resemble the lectures a college professor might give, and many people express surprise when they learn Hageman is still a teenager.

To prepare each week, Hageman reportedly spends two to three hours researching each subject online and in books and magazines. To help this budding “armchair general” in his research efforts, we’re sending him a free subscription to *ACG*.

Readers can check out Hageman’s podcasts at militaryhistorypodcast.blogspot.com.

Real Heroes of the War on Terrorism

The following is just one of the many inspiring stories the media has overlooked.

Every day, Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines distinguish themselves while fighting America’s enemies. Yet when reporting on the War on Terrorism, members of the mainstream media usually ignore these achievements. To help publicize the dedicated service of these “real heroes,” *ACG* is shining the spotlight on some of the notable acts performed by the men and women in America’s armed forces. The following is just one of the inspiring stories the media has overlooked.

At a ceremony at 82d Aviation Brigade Headquarters on November 8, 2005, the U.S. Army awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) to four OH-58 Kiowa helicopter



U.S. ARMY SGT. MICHAEL J. CARDEN

Left to right: Chief Warrant Officer Charles Folk, 1st Lt. Michael Hultquist, and Chief Warrant Officers James Cornell and James Williamson. On November 8, 2005, these aviators from the 17th Cavalry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division each received the Distinguished Flying Cross for valorous actions during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

pilots for their combat actions during Operation Iraqi Freedom. First Lieutenant Michael Hultquist and Chief Warrant Officers James Cornell, Charles Folk and James Williamson of the 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry

Regiment, 82d Airborne Division became the 23d through 26th recipients of the DFC since the invasion of Iraq began in March 2003. The four pilots were recognized for aiding a force of U.S. and Iraqi troops ambushed on March 22.

According to Sergeant Michael J. Carden of the 82d Airborne Division Public Affairs Office, the Kiowa pilots monitored a Mayday radio call from the ambushed force as they were completing a routine reconnaissance mission near Lake Tar Tar in northwestern Iraq. Despite being critically low on fuel and unable to call for assistance due to their distance from their base, the four unhesitatingly flew to the aid of the waylaid troopers and engaged the enemy at close range, saving the friendly ground force.

While acknowledging that it was a “tremendous honor” to receive the DFC, Lieutenant Hultquist spoke for all four recipients when he emphasized, “the biggest thing for us that day was the Soldiers we were fighting for made it home alive.”

ACG READER POLL

Bedford Forrest – War Hero or Renegade?

The November 2005 issue of *ACG* featured the *You Command* article “Hell to Pay: Bedford Forrest at Brice’s Crossroads, 1864” and the *Dispatches* item “General Nathan Bedford Forrest: War Hero or Villain?” We asked those visiting our website forums whether they considered the controversial Confederate general a Civil War hero or a renegade. Here’s what they had to say:

The overwhelming majority of voters seem to agree with the late Civil War historian Shelby Foote, who considered Forrest one of the few true military geniuses produced by the war.

Check out our other surveys and polls at armchairgeneral.com.

Forrest was a brilliant cavalry commander and definitely a war hero	85.2%
Forrest was a ruthless renegade and a war criminal	9.9%
Not sure	4.9%

DISPATCHES

DID YOU KNOW?



Soldiers carry a wounded man to a waiting medevac helicopter after a firefight in a Vietnamese rice paddy.

U.S. War Dead. Between 1945 and 1950, the bodies of 178,000 American servicemen were returned to the U.S. while an additional 80,000 sets of remains were reburied in overseas military cemeteries at families' requests.

Wartime Crime and Punishment. The U.S. Army in Europe executed 70 American Soldiers found guilty by courts-martial of capital crimes – most committed against civilians – between 1943 and 1946.

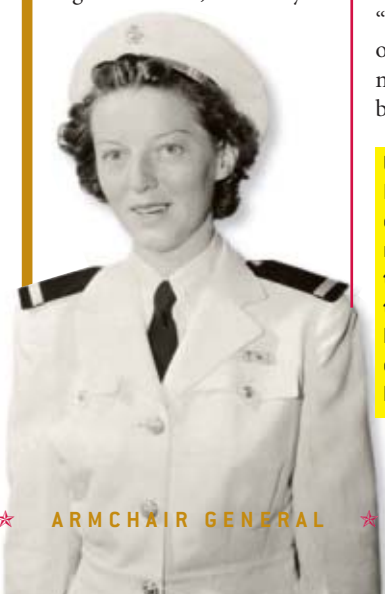
First LOM. For her daring escape under fire after serving on Bataan and Corregidor in 1942, U.S. Navy

nurse Lt. jg. Ann Agnes Bernatitus was the first recipient of the Legion of Merit medal (established July 20, 1942).

Vietnam Killers. During the Vietnam War, 51 percent of U.S. combat casualties were caused by rifle/machine-gun fire; 36 percent were due to artillery, mortars and grenades; and 2 percent were a result of mines/booby traps.

In the Rear With the Gear. Only about one in five American military personnel serving in Vietnam were in combat units (e.g., infantry, artillery, armor, aircrews). The vast majority of those “in-country” worked in an office/warehouse, ate in a mess hall, and slept in a bed/cot each night.

U.S. Navy Lt. jg. Ann Agnes Bernatitus, the first recipient of the Legion of Merit medal, was the only nurse to escape from Bataan and the siege of Corregidor. She left the Manila Bay fortress on a submarine two days before the surrender.



BETHMANN/CORBIS

Korean War Hero Recognized

Hungarian refugee and Holocaust survivor Tibor Rubin received the Medal of Honor from President George W. Bush in a White House ceremony over half a century after his heroic acts as an Army corporal in the Korean War (1950-1953). Rubin survived the infamous Mauthausen Nazi concentration camp, although most of his family perished in the Holocaust. He came to the United States following World War II and joined the U.S. Army shortly before the Korean War broke out. He later explained, “When I came to America, it was the first time I was free. It was one of the reasons I joined the U.S. Army, because I wanted to show my appreciation.”

According to his Medal of Honor citation, Rubin was a virtual one-man army as a rifleman in the 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division. He

single-handedly repulsed a North Korean attack during his unit's retreat to the Pusan perimeter, and then captured hundreds of enemy soldiers as the regiment moved north following the breakout. In October 1950, Chinese forces captured Rubin after he held off another massed enemy attack. He spent nearly three years in a POW camp but refused offers by the Chinese to repatriate him to his native Hungary. He chose instead to endure the brutal hardships of captivity to ensure that his fellow Americans survived. Rubin saved as many as 40 comrades by his selfless concern for their health and morale.

“The real heroes are those who never came home. I was just lucky,” Rubin said. “This Medal of Honor belongs to all prisoners of war, to all the heroes who died fighting in those wars.”



Tibor Rubin is applauded after receiving the Medal of Honor during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House on September 23, 2005. Tibor, a 76-year-old Holocaust survivor and former corporal, received America's highest decoration for saving 40 American lives through acts of heroism on the front lines and in a Chinese POW camp during the Korean War.

MARK WILSON/GETTY IMAGES

DISPATCHES

FIGHTING WORDS

OFFICIAL U.S. ARMY PHOTO



“Our Soldiers don’t ask for much in return for their selfless service. They ask that they be allowed to accomplish their mission. They ask that the American people be there with them as they answer the call. And they ask that they never be forgotten – both those who return and those who do not.”

– Gen. Richard A. Cody, Vice Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, 2005

“General Dayan, the Israeli Defense Minister, said: ‘to cross the [Suez] canal the Egyptians would need the support of both the American and Soviet engineer corps.’ I do not hold Dayan’s dismissive remark against him. I accept the tribute. I know how hard we worked.”

– From *The Crossing of the Suez Canal*, Gen. Saad El Shazly remarks on the Egyptian army’s unexpected success at the outset of the Yom Kippur War in October 1973.

“Because of our efforts, Iraq may become the Middle East’s beacon of liberty. Or it may end as another Arab pyre. The Iraqis, not us, will determine their ultimate fate. Their choices will shape a civilization’s future.”

– Ralph Peters, *New Glory: Expanding America’s Global Supremacy*



WALLY MCNAMEE/CORBIS

“First we’re going to cut it off and then we’re going to kill it.”

– On the eve of the first Gulf War (1990-1991), Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Colin Powell comments on the U.S. military strategy for defeating Saddam Hussein’s Iraqi army.

“A good plan violently executed now is better than a perfect plan next week.”

– Gen. George S. Patton Jr., *War As I Knew It*



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

DISPATCHES

APRIL & MAY EVENTS

APRIL 12-13, 1861

Firing on Fort Sumter

The bloodiest war in United States history begins at 4:30 a.m. on April 12, 1861, when fire-eating secessionist Edmund Ruffin is given the honor of launching the first Confederate mortar shell at Union-held Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. The attack precipitates the American Civil War. When the war ends four years later, over 600,000 Union and Confederate Soldiers are dead.

In the weeks prior to the bombardment, Confederate General Pierre G. T. Beauregard establishes a series of seacoast forts capable of striking Fort Sumter. Beauregard calls for the garrison commander, Union Major Robert Anderson, to surrender. Anderson, however, refuses and vows to hold out until a Union relief fleet can come to his assistance.

Following Beauregard's opening round, thousands of large-caliber artillery and mortar shells relentlessly pound Sumter's thick walls. Although there are no casualties on either side, Anderson is forced to surrender the stronghold on April 13 when extensive fires caused by the shelling renders the fort untenable. Both Beauregard and Anderson become heroes to their respective countrymen as a result of this first hostile action of the Civil War.



A lithograph shows the interior view of Fort Sumter during the bombardment of April 12, 1861.



Despite sinking more ships at Jutland, the Germans withdrew, conceding England a strategic victory.



June 16, 1916. An illustration for the *London News* depicts British battle cruisers encountering the German High Seas Fleet during the Battle of Jutland.

DISPATCHES

MAY 31, 1916

Battle of Jutland.

The Battle of Jutland, World War I's only major sea fight between the opposing British and German fleets, is also history's last great "battleship" engagement. Although battleships play a role a quarter of a century later in World War II, the huge battlewagons of that era are only supporting players to aircraft carriers, the new masters of naval warfare. Neither aviation nor submarines play a part at Jutland. Instead, battleships and the smaller battle cruisers bear the brunt of the fighting as they

The German High Seas Fleet never again attempts to challenge its British enemy.

exchange long-range salvos of huge armor-piercing shells.

When the commander of the German High Seas Fleet, Admiral Reinhard Scheer, brings his ships into the North Sea, he is surprised to find British Admiral John Jellicoe's Grand Fleet waiting for him. In the subsequent Battle of Jutland, Scheer sinks or damages more British ships than he loses himself, but he then decides to retire to the safety of the High Seas Fleet's homeport. This leaves Jellicoe in control of the seas, resulting in a strategic (if not tactical) British victory. The German High Seas Fleet never again attempts to challenge its British enemy, nor do any of the world's great navies ever again fight a classic "battleship" action.

DESTINATIONS

National Museum of the United States Air Force



OFFICIAL U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO

A B-2 Spirit stealth bomber is one of many aircraft on display at the National Museum of the United States Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio.

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio, is home to the oldest and largest military aviation museum in the world, the National Museum of the United States Air Force. A treat for both aviation buffs and those interested in military history, the museum displays over 300 planes and missiles of various types from all historical eras. It sits on 17 acres and features a main complex that includes an IMAX Theater, an outdoor Airpark, a World War II-era Nissen Hut, and the 8th U.S. Air Force control tower. The main complex galleries contain "habitat displays" that place the aircraft within their proper historical context using mannequins, authentic uniforms and equipment, dramatic lighting and sound effects. The displays immerse visitors in the exhibits and help give them a genuine feel for the respective era.

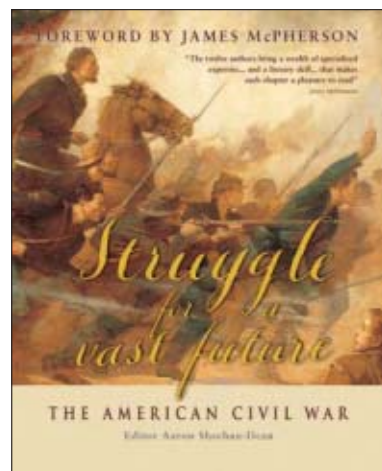
Although the habitat displays are outstanding, the real stars of the museum are the hundreds of vintage aircraft. Visitors can see treasures such as a Spad biplane from the skies of World War I, a B-25 bomber configured similarly to the ones flown by the Doolittle Raiders, a Japanese Zero, a B-29 bomber, and President Kennedy's *Air Force One* jet. And since the museum recently recalled the famous B-17 *Memphis Belle* from its previous home in Memphis, Tennessee, future visitors will be able to see this historic World War II veteran of the bomber war over Europe after its restoration is complete.

This museum is a definite must-see! Hours of operation, exhibit schedules, and updates on the progress of the *Memphis Belle* can be found at wpafb.af.mil/museum.

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Stephen D. Engle, author of *Struggle for the Heartland*

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Gary W. Gallagher, author of *The Confederate War*

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DISPATCHES

Map Quest

Navigate your way through a 20-mile hike – or a two-hour drive to your in-laws – without ever looking at a map. The technology originated in the military is now available in affordable, portable units for us civilians. So go ahead – live out your dreams of being a bush-master without ever leaving the shores of the States.

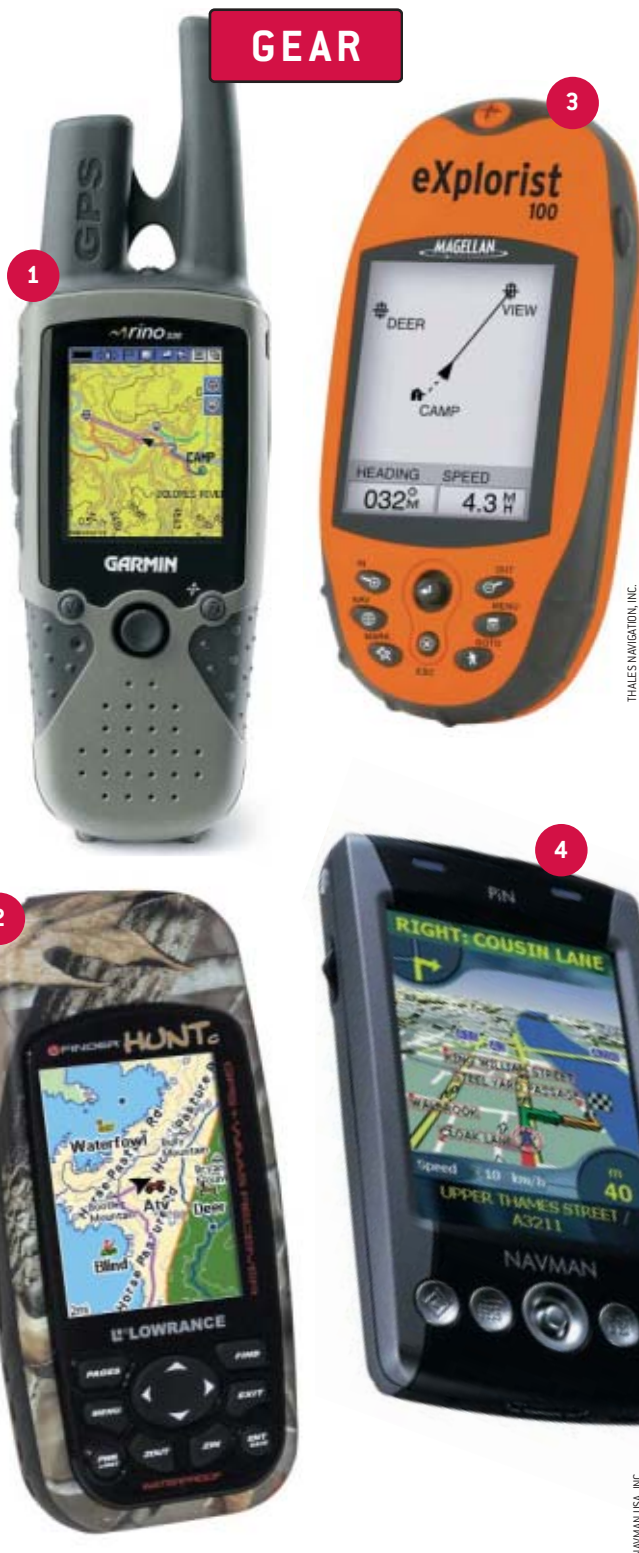
1 Garmin Rino 530

This isn't your father's walkie-talkie. Need to radio your control station with your coordinates? The Rino has you covered. A patented location-reporting feature lets you exchange GPS positions with other Rino users in your group. With five watts of power, you can even make emergency calls from 14 miles away. The Rino is also compatible with NOAA weather reports, so you'll always know what's ahead. \$535.70, garmin.com

2 Lowrance iFinder Hunt C

If you're more often on the hunt for game than targets of the human persuasion, this is your GPS. Designed specifically for hunters, this handheld's color display offers icons for marking tree stands, game signs and vehicles, as well as a "scout mode" to mark perimeters. Built-in extras include features such as an electronic compass, barometric altimeter, microphone and voice recorder. When you're shooting to kill (a boar, that is), you'll appreciate the camo case's sleek, watertight design – perfect for one-handed use. \$359, lowrance.com

GEAR



3 Magellan eXplorist 100

Despite its affordable price and portable size, the eXplorist 100 has all the features a weekend warrior needs, including accuracy to within three meters. View direction, speed and distance to your destination on three navigation screens, and save up to three track log files, 500 interest points and 20 routes. With one-button access to most features, you don't even need an engineering degree to operate it. \$125.99, magellangps.com

4 Navman PiN 570

Want to check another Civil War battle site off your list? The PiN 570 not only stores the list, it gets you to the location. Navman's handheld unit combines GPS technology with a sleek PDA that comes complete with all the Microsoft Office essentials required for business on the go. Enter your destination and let PiN's turn-by-turn voice guidance show you the way. Or, choose the quickest or shortest route and view it on a 3-D color map. The PiN is equally suited to a dashboard, pocket or briefcase. \$599.99, navman.com

PARADOX ACE 2006^{LINE-UP} STRATEGY IS OUR GAME



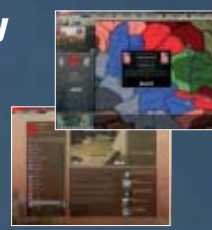
WHAT'S YOURS?



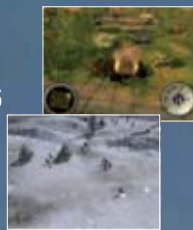
Heart of Empire Rome
Empire Building Simulator
Shipping to stores Q2, 2006
www.heartofempire.com



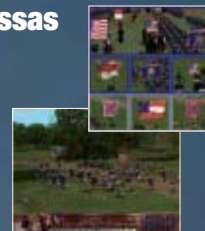
Hearts of Iron II Domsday
World War III Grand Strategy
Shipping to stores April 4, 2006
www.heartsofire2.com/dd



Rush for Berlin
World War II RTS
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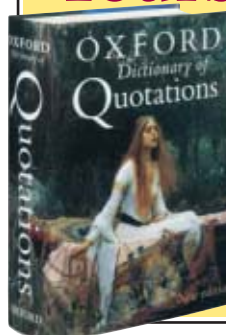
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COMMANDER DOSSIER

General Vo Nguyen Giap

A former history teacher turned revolutionary, this Vietnamese general became one of the 20th century's most successful commanders.

Senior General Vo Nguyen Giap claimed that his first command, in December 1944, was a force of only 34 men armed with two revolvers, 17 rifles, 14 flintlocks and one light machine gun. Over the next 30 years he built a respected, well-equipped, modern army.

Political Influences

Giap was born in the village of An Xa, an impoverished area of Vietnam, on August 25, 1911 (possibly 1910 or 1912). Descended from revolutionaries of the 1885 Can Vuong uprising, his parents raised him with strong sentiments against the occupying French colonials.

While a student at Quoc Hoc School in Hue, Giap met other revolution-minded Vietnamese. Politicized, he joined the Communists seeing them as better organized, more action-oriented, and enjoying the greatest popular support of the competing nationalist groups. Arrested for establishing an anti-French newspaper, Giap spent time in Lao Bao prison in 1930.

In 1940, the Communist Party ordered Giap to travel to China for political and military training. While there he met Ho Chi Minh, another dedicated Vietnamese revolutionary leader. Back home, French authorities arrested Giap's wife – also a revolutionary activist – and she died in prison after being tortured. Other family members were also tortured and some were executed.

Military Influences

In the 1930s, while ostensibly teaching French political history, Giap instead taught Vietnamese students the strategy and tactics of Napoleonic warfare. He also focused on recent military affairs. Chief among the works that influenced him was T.E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Also known as "Lawrence of Arabia," the author advocated using irregular troops to disrupt conventional forces. Giap called Lawrence's book his "fighting gospel."

Bloody Roads to Victory

In March 1946, Ho Chi Minh, who was then leading Vietnam's anti-French insurgency, appointed Giap a general and commander in chief of the Vietminh (Vietnamese Communist army). Though initially

impetuous – a quick temper earned him the nickname "Volcano Under Snow" – Giap soon learned that a people's war required patience.

Giap's first major campaign (with brigade-sized units and artillery) hit isolated French outposts at Dong Khe in October 1950. The French lost 6,000 men and three tank platoons – their worst-ever colonial defeat. The campaign set the pattern for future operations: attack isolated positions and then ambush enemy reinforcements.

When the French concentrated at remote Dien Bien Phu in 1954, Giap ignored Chinese advisors who urged him to employ massed assaults. Instead, he initiated a siege. After dragging 200 artillery pieces through forbidding jungle terrain, his troops battered the French garrison. With their surrender of Dien Bien Phu, the French lost Vietnam.

Grab Them by the Belt

Victory over the French left Vietnam divided into two nations split at the 17th parallel. Fearing that a Communist takeover of Vietnam threatened all of Southeast Asia, America steadily increased its aid to democratic South Vietnam. Giap realized that he did not have to defeat the Americans on the battlefield; rather, he only had to avoid losing the fight until the United States quit the contest.

To compensate for the Americans' helicopter-borne mobility and overwhelming artillery and airpower, Giap developed "grab them by the belt" tactics. Vietcong (VC) forces and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regulars engaged the Americans at such close range that it was too risky for the U.S. to employ artillery and air support.

SEE

Victory at Any Cost: The Genius of Viet Nam's Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap by Cecil B. Currey. Brassey's Inc., 1997.

How We Won the War by Generals Vo Nguyen Giap & Van Tien Dung. RECON Publications, 1976.

Interviews with Giap:
<http://www.cnn.com>
<http://www.pbs.org>

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ASSESSMENT OF GIAP:

- ✓ QUICK-TEMPERED PERSONALITY
- ✓ PATIENT IN WAR
- ✓ LEARNED FROM MISTAKES
- ✓ COMBINED MILITARY, POLITICAL AND PROPAGANDA STRATEGIES

Victory From Disaster

Giap urged a protracted war that combined guerrilla actions with political education and propaganda. However, his rivals in the politburo eventually forced him to conduct an operation he opposed.

The January 1968 Tet Offensive struck virtually every province and major city in South Vietnam. Communist guerrillas, engaging in conventional attacks, were decimated by American and South Vietnamese firepower.

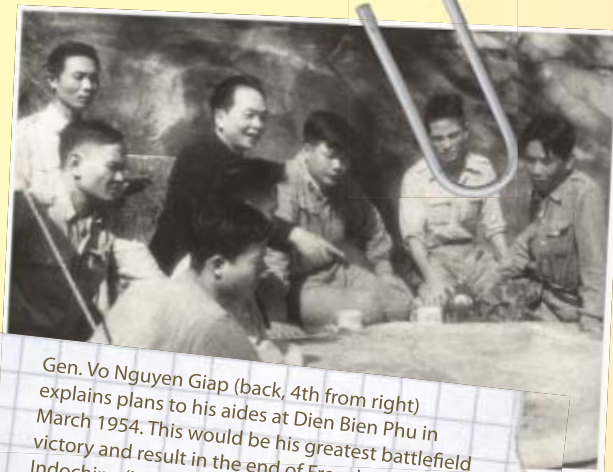
The VC was forever destroyed as a fighting force. The Communists were unable to hold on to any of the areas they had seized. The expected popular uprising never occurred.

Yet Giap's military disaster produced a political victory. Members of the American media, who regarded Giap's troops as third-rate, were stunned by the violence and news coverage of the war turned increasingly negative.

Staunchly supported by America's Cold War enemies China and the Soviet Union, Communist North Vietnam and Giap's NVA carried on the war while U.S. political leadership faced mounting domestic and international pressure to withdraw. American political support, which began to erode in the wake of Tet, finally evaporated altogether when the U.S. Congress cancelled military aid to South Vietnam (1973-1975).

Political opponents and advancing age forced Giap out as commander before the Communists' final victory in 1975. However, he remained defense minister until 1980. In 1978, the army he built invaded Cambodia to quell Khmer Rouge guerrillas, and in 1979, it turned back a Chinese invasion into Vietnam.

Gerald D. Swick is a writer and historian whose works have appeared in magazines such as "Blue Ridge Country" and "Lincoln Lore" as well as other publications.



Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap (back, 4th from right) explains plans to his aides at Dien Bien Phu in March 1954. This would be his greatest battlefield victory and result in the end of French rule in Indochina (Vietnam).

AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Giap in full dress uniform as North Vietnamese defense minister. Under the political leadership of Ho Chi Minh, Giap successfully led guerrilla forces against succeeding Japanese, French and American troops in Vietnam.

PICTORIAL PARADE/GETTY IMAGES



Giap (far left) visits a military unit. After the failed 1968 Tet Offensive, only his NVA regulars remained as a fighting force to oppose the Americans.

BETTMANN/CORBIS

WEAPON FILES



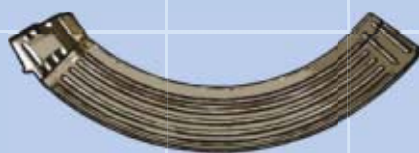
Simple to manufacture and easy to maintain, the AK-47 is the “poor man’s” weapon of choice.

The AK-47 assault rifle is an iconic field arm of modern warfare, with over 80 million produced in factories from the former Soviet Union to Uganda. The key to its success is its simplicity.

The AK-47 (Avtomat Kalashnikova Model 1947) is the brainchild of Mikhail Timofeyevich Kalashnikov, a self-trained technician and born inventor who served in the Soviet tank corps during World War II. The weapon features a gas-operated, rotating-bolt system fed by an instantly recognizable 30-round “banana clip.” Its magazine empties in seconds in full-auto mode, with a muzzle velocity of 710 meters (2,329 feet) per second.

The Soviet 7.62 x 39 mm Model 1943 medium-range cartridge – small enough

The AK-47 Illustrated



The AK-47’s design is simple but robust. The standard “banana clip” magazine holds 30 rounds while the larger magazine holds 40. In combat, the weapon’s distinctive sound is easy to differentiate from the American M-16. The U.S.S.R. flooded the Third World with the cheap and easy-to-operate AK-47, making it the most widely used assault rifle in the world.



Inventor Mikhail Kalashnikov holds his famous AK-47 assault rifle.
REUTERS/CORBIS

to allow auto-loading but powerful enough for effective use at combat ranges (300-400 meters) – made Kalashnikov’s assault rifle possible. The German “Kurz” (short) and M-35 rounds apparently influenced the bullet’s design.

Simple and inexpensive to produce, some models of the AK-47 even have stamped receivers (bodies) pressed from a single sheet of metal. Other models, however, are machine-tooled. Its outward appearance borrows heavily from Germany’s MP-44 submachine gun – although Kalashnikov is always quick to point out the differences.

With few moving parts, the AK-47 is easily maintained in the field and is resistant to dust, humidity and water. In fact, firing and maintaining the weapon is so simple that a child can be taught to use it – as the civil wars of Africa and South-east Asia have tragically proved.

In Vietnam, the AK-47 exhibited less punch, accuracy and range than the American M-14; however, it was less

AK-47 Quick Evaluation:

- Inexpensive to manufacture
- Rugged; reliable; easy to maintain
- Simple to use
- Inaccurate on full-auto

awkward than the M-14 in jungle fighting. And while far more dependable than early models of the U.S. M-16, the American weapon offered better aiming capability in rapid-response situations.

The AK-47’s flaws include a bolt that makes a loud “clacking” sound when cocked; a short combat range; and inaccuracy and a tendency to climb when fired fully automatic. At a range of 300 meters, it has a hit probability of only 29 percent. At 400 meters, that drops to just 16 percent. At over 500 meters, the broad side of a barn becomes a challenging target. However, since most firefights take place at 150-300 meters, the M-43 bullet’s tumbling effect produces ghastly wounds in sufficient numbers to satisfy even the most bloodthirsty dictator.

In its glory days, the Soviet Union flooded the Third World with this cheap and reliable automatic weapon, making its presence in global trouble spots today nearly ubiquitous.

Gerald D. Swick is a writer and historian whose works have appeared in the magazines “Blue Ridge Country” and “Lincoln Lore” as well as other publications.

SEE

The AK-47 Story: Evolution of the Kalashnikov Weapons by Edward Ezell. Stackpole Books, 1986.

The AK-47: Weapons at War by John Falkner. Spellmount Publishers, 2001.

The AK-47 by Chris McNab. MBI Publishing Co., 2001.

AK-47 and its descendants: <http://world.guns.ru>

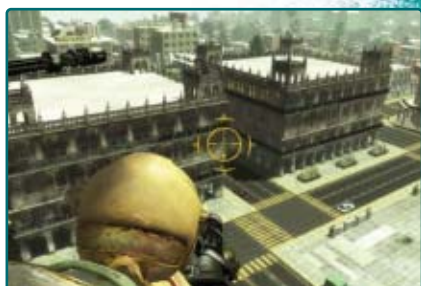
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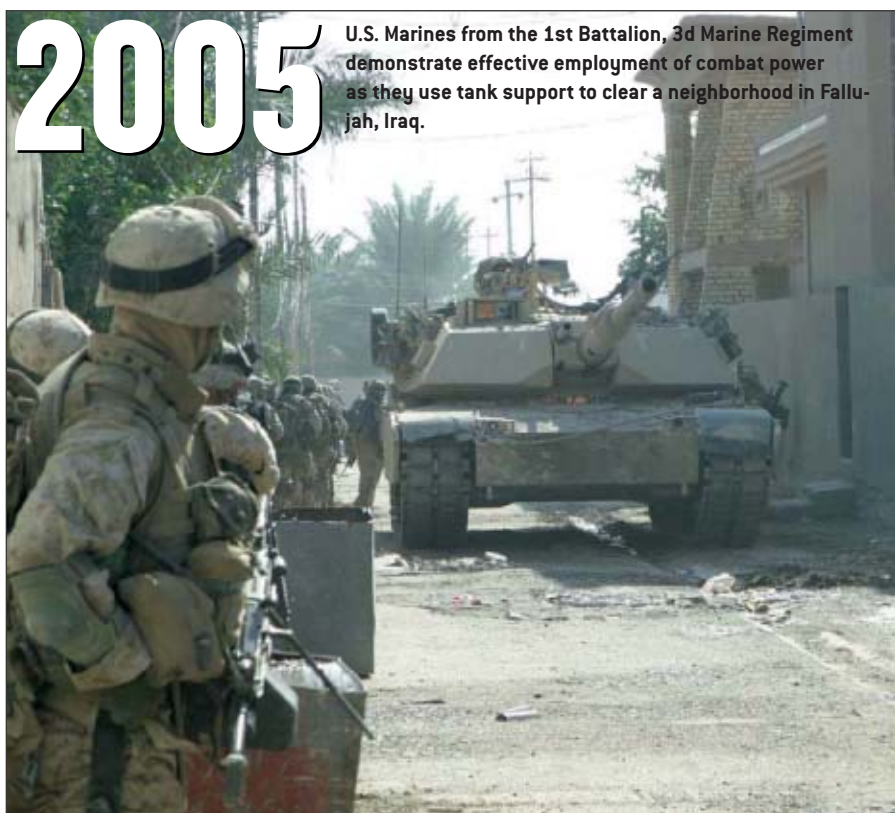
WAR COLLEGE



1918

September 13, 1918. Soldiers of the 27th U.S. Infantry Division operate alongside British tanks near the Somme, France. The American Civil War and World War I each proved that mass did not always guarantee victory.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES



2005

U.S. Marines from the 1st Battalion, 3d Marine Regiment demonstrate effective employment of combat power as they use tank support to clear a neighborhood in Fallujah, Iraq.

U.S. MARINE CORPS PHOTO BY LANCE CPL WILL LATHROP

PRINCIPLES OF WAR REVISITED

MASS

Today's precision technologies dictate a change to an outdated doctrine – a Napoleonic aphorism advising the commander to mass for battle is worse than useless.

This installment completes our series of articles re-evaluating the traditional principles of war by debunking one of the most respected pearls of martial wisdom: the principle of mass. Mass has always been an invalid principle of war. In fact, it is nothing more than a battlefield tip attempting to masquerade as a strategic idea. In that inflated role, it is woefully unbalanced in its advice. Modern warfare provides proof that mass does not work; yet our official doctrines of war still cling desperately to this colossal anachronism.

In the Western world's history of warfare, the principle of mass has had two dimensions: the importance of overall numbers; and advice on how to employ whatever numbers a commander has on hand. The famous adage, "God is on the side of the bigger battalions" – variously attributed to Voltaire, Frederick the Great, Napoleon and Bismarck – emphasizes the importance of having many soldiers. The linear tactics of the 18th century usually meant that the commander with the greater numbers had a good chance of "overlapping" his enemy's lines, thus exposing a vulnerable flank. At the theater level, greater numbers meant enhanced opportunity to project com-

Striking the proper balance between concentration and distribution is crucial.

bat power throughout the area of operations and the ability to maintain reserves. It is hard to argue against the advisability of having a large army.

As armies multiplied in size, modern operational art began to develop. Along with this came an understanding that massing for battle must be balanced with the need for proper *distribution* of combat power throughout the theater of war. Even as generals continued to quote Napoleonic truisms about mass, they were forced to disperse their combat power for a variety of reasons: logistical necessity; population control; efficient use of road networks; and security against weapons of mass destruction. It became clear that in real war a successful commander must concentrate (mass) and distribute combat power.

Striking the proper balance between concentration and distribution is crucial. For instance, consider a defense against an advancing enemy tank formation. If every friendly tank and artillery piece on the battlefield focuses its fire on the first enemy combat vehicle to enter the engagement area, the result might be catastrophic for that particular vehicle but the rest of the enemy force would escape unscathed. Thus, a tank company commander must simultaneously concentrate his fires at the decisive point and distribute those fires throughout the enemy formation. Concentration – mass – is only half the equation.

The introduction of precision technologies shifts the balance between these two theoretical opposites. Without today's weapons systems, each friendly tank in the previous scenario might have only a 25-percent chance of killing an enemy vehicle. In order to ensure the opponent's vehicles are destroyed, a commander might order four tanks to fire on each of them. Massing fires in this manner was once necessary to overcome any single tank's lack of accuracy.

Modern precision technology, however, changes the combat equation. Rather than having only a 25-percent chance of killing the enemy, today's tanks have closer to a 90-percent kill probability. This new level of precision directly affects tactical dispositions since it is no longer necessary to mass the fires of four tanks against each enemy target. There-

Principles of War

Mass
Objective
Offensive
Maneuver
Unity of Command
Security
Simplicity
Surprise
Economy of Force

fore, the key to understanding warfare in the Information Age is to realize that *greater precision leads to greater distribution of combat power*. Precision warfare has become the opposite of mass warfare.

While our doctrinal manuals remain steadfast in their devotion to 19th-century battlefield dynamics, today's successful generals are concentrating and distributing combat power in accordance with the realities of precision warfare. For example, a battalion operating in Iraq might concentrate combat power in a raid in order to destroy an insurgent strongpoint, and then the next day distribute that combat power to secure local communities to administer assigned territories. In such a dynamic situation, a Napoleonic aphorism advising the commander to mass for battle is worse than useless. Rather than relying on an outdated so-



U.S. Marines from the 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment conduct combined arms training prior to recapturing Fallujah, Iraq. Tank-infantry team training is vital to properly prepare for actual combat.

called "principle of war," modern military leaders must be trained to understand and achieve the proper balance between concentration and distribution. ★

Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Robert R. Leonhard has published numerous articles on modern warfare and has authored three books: *"The Art of Maneuver," "The Principles of War for the Information Age"* and *"Fighting by Minutes."*

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HOW THEY FOUGHT

Towton

[1461]



agghh!

This water is bitter cold! But at least we're safe for the moment. Now you just stay still while I have a look at your wound – and keep quiet, man! We have precious little time before those damned Yorkist knights reach this river and begin looting the bodies around us for money and armor. Of more concern to you and me, those heartless bastards will kill any of us they find alive. So, hush!

Thankfully your wound looks worse than it actually is. The arrow-head likely bounced off someone's armor before striking you. Con-

DATE/TIME: Palm Sunday, March 29, 1461

PLACE: Cock River, Towton

UNIT: Archers of the Duke of Somerset

sidering the storm of arrows we weathered today, we're lucky to be alive.

Since both sides in this English war – those of us support-

ing Lancaster and those traitors backing York – include a great number of archers, battles typically start with a longbow duel like the one we just witnessed. With thousands of us in closely drawn ranks, accuracy doesn't matter much. Usually we give as good as we get, but this time the Yorkists clearly bested us. Their commanding position – uphill from our force and with a blizzard blowing from behind them –

Above: This skull, discovered recently near the Towton battlefield, exhibits the type of cranial trauma suffered by many battle participants. Most of the remains showed evidence of multiple injuries caused by a variety of projectiles and handheld weapons dating to the late medieval period.



The savage face
of Yorkist victory.



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**The bloody slaughter
during England's
War of the Roses was
anything but rosy.**

WHERE DO WE GET SUCH MEN?

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—David J. Livanag, Lieutenant Colonel, Special Forces
United States Army, from the Foreword

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The mounds of dead and dying men that cover the fields after the battles don't look like any flower garden I've ever seen!



Top left: Exhaustion inevitably sets in after a grueling battle.
Top right: Sheer terror crosses the face of a Lancastrian as his life meets a brutal end.
Middle: Battlefield debris marks the trail of a fleeing army.
Left: Even a rock becomes a fearsome weapon in the hands of a warrior.

sent their arrows pouring deeply into our lines while ours fell pitifully short. They launched volley after volley until the armies closed in for hand-to-hand combat. Bloody murder, it was!

Of course, then the *really* gory work began – hacking and stabbing with sword and dagger, thrusting with spear and lance, and bludgeoning and smashing with ax and mace. There was nothing noble or romantic about it. It was terrible seeing men carved up like sides of beef and left with their lives draining out onto the mud. However, there's no such thing as a quick and clean death with the weapons we use.

If you ask me, this battle went wrong for us from the start. Gone are the good one-sided clashes our fathers used to have with the French. Now we're fighting other Englishmen, which means both sides use the same weapons and tactics. In general, the army that catches a bit of luck or has a commander who really knows his business wins the day.

I hear they've taken to calling this the War of the Roses since our symbol is the red rose of Lancaster and the enemy marches under the white rose of York. Seems daft to me to name all this murderous slaughter after a flower. I can tell you, the mounds of dead and dying men that cover the fields after the battles don't look like any flower garden I've ever seen!

Things aren't very rosy now either, are they? The few of us who managed to run away with our lives have ended up waist deep in this miserable river awaiting nightfall and a chance to escape. Having seen the aftermath at the battles of Wakefield and St. Albans, I know we can't expect any mercy now that the Yorkist blood is up. If the knights find us, they'll kill us on the spot.

Shhh! Did you hear that? Damn, they're here sooner than I expected! Quick, slip into the deeper water and drift along with the corpses – or else risk becoming one. ★

Steve West, a military historian, has written extensively on military subjects in the United States and the United Kingdom.

THEY FLEW LIKE EAGLES.
THEY FOUGHT LIKE LIONS.

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Language
Violence



XBOX
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HISTORY'S MYSTERIES

The Mystery of Stalin's BARBAROSSA Surprise

Why did Russia's paranoid "man of steel" believe one of Hitler's biggest lies?

From the moment Adolf Hitler took power in 1933, his diplomatic record consisted of a long string of broken promises, faithless bargains and smashed treaties. Why, then, as late as June 1941 did the murderously paranoid Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin trust the Nazi leader to keep his word and abide by the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact?

BARBAROSSA

In 1940, Hitler ordered his generals to develop a plan to turn the full fury of Nazi armies against his fellow dictator to the east. Almost as soon as he did, the widespread, highly effective Soviet intelligence system began sending Stalin a steady stream of evidence revealing Germany's duplicitous intentions. Rather than being grateful for the notice, the intelligence was actually the last thing the Soviet leader wanted to hear because it was completely at odds with his preconceptions – and his Machiavellian intentions.

Stalin believed the fight to subdue the Western alliance of Great Britain and France had weakened Germany, perhaps fatally. He felt he could exploit the opportunity and convinced himself that when the moment was right, his Red Army – not Nazi Germany's military machine – would launch an offensive into Western Europe. Yet when France fell in only a matter of weeks in June 1940, Stalin should have realized his folly. A

more prudent dictator might have begun preparing his forces to defend against an eastward move by a Nazi army that had hardly broken a sweat while defeating the Western Allies. Instead, when Hitler's legions launched their attack on the U.S.S.R. – Operation Barbarossa – in the early hours of June 22, 1941, they struck a Red Army that was woefully, indeed *deliberately*, ill prepared to meet the onslaught.

With nearly 4,000 Luftwaffe aircraft controlling the skies overhead, over 3 million men in 140 German divisions led by as many as 3,500 tanks rolled across the border and began to drive deep into Russia. Stalin had expressly forbidden forward-deployed positions in Poland and the Baltics to prepare to defend against the invasion. Already suffering from the ruthless 1937-1940 purges that decapitated its leadership, the consequently hapless Red Army lost 60 percent of its pre-invasion troop strength – nearly 3 million soldiers – by October 1941. By mid-Decem-

ber, German armies hammered on the gates of Moscow, besieged Leningrad, and occupied Kiev.

Stalin's empire tottered on the brink of destruction. Why had he failed to heed his spies' chillingly accurate warnings?

WHAT STALIN KNEW

Although he rounded up and shot "the usual suspects" – i.e., unsuccessful Soviet generals – Stalin himself was clearly at fault for the 1941 disasters. A number of recent books have shed light on his mysterious failure to acknowledge the obvious threat posed by the Germans and to prepare his armies for Hitler's impending invasion.

A few prime examples include *Grand Delusion: Stalin and the German Invasion of Russia* by Gabriel Gorodetsky; *Stalin's Folly: The Tragic First Ten Days of WWII on the Eastern Front* by Constantine Pleshakov; and *What Stalin Knew: The Enigma of Barbarossa* by David E. Murphy. While all three present a wealth of information on the subject – much of it newly mined from the Soviet archives – Murphy's book cuts right to the heart of the mystery.

A former Berlin station head and later chief of Soviet operations for the CIA, Murphy details *exactly* what intelligence Stalin received. For instance, Soviet master spy Richard Sorge learned the precise date of the Nazi attack from sources within the German embassy in Tokyo and passed this information to Stalin. Rather than honoring Sorge for his work, however, Stalin disowned the unfortunate agent after the Japanese captured him. When they offered to exchange him for Japanese prisoners held by the Russians, Stalin replied, "Richard Sorge? I do not know a person of that name." The Japanese hanged Sorge in 1944.

Stalin even ignored the wealth of Barbarossa intelligence provided by the reliable "Red Orchestra" spy network in Western Europe, run by the Polish-born Soviet agent Leiba Domb. Fed up with receiving reports from Domb that contradicted his own beliefs, Stalin scrawled across the margin of one such message, "Find out the author of this provocation and have him punished." Domb survived this death sentence only by the skin of his teeth.

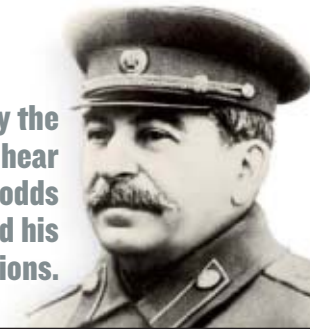
The evidence presented by Murphy – indeed, by all three authors – is a damning in-

The Germans collect Russian prisoners during the opening phase of Operation Barbarossa.

The hapless Red Army lost nearly 3 million soldiers by October 1941. By mid-December, German armies hammered on the gates of Moscow, besieged Leningrad, and occupied Kiev.



Adolf Hitler's diplomatic record consisted of a long string of broken promises, faithless bargains and smashed treaties.



The intelligence was actually the last thing Stalin wanted to hear because it was completely at odds with his preconceptions – and his Machiavellian intentions.

dictment of Stalin's repressive, one-man rule and his mysterious, single-minded refusal to acknowledge the truth.

WHY STALIN FAILED TO ACT

Stalin's inexplicable failure to take action when warned of the impending Nazi invasion has generated a number of theories. Perhaps, some suggest, he was too absorbed in planning for his own attack on Nazi Germany. Others credit Stalin's complacent mindset to a successful Nazi deception plan, pointing out that carefully planted German disinformation had already helped turn the Soviet dictator against Red Army leaders like Marshal Mikhail Tukachevsky, who was shot in the 1937 purges. Although not nearly as elaborate as the Allied deception plan that provided cover for the Normandy invasion, German efforts to hide Barbarossa were indeed extensive, if not particularly subtle.

One theory even makes the incredible claim that Stalin forbade the Red Army to prepare for the invasion because he was actually encouraging Hitler to attack him in order to lure Nazi forces into a carefully planned trap deep inside Western Russia. Such speculation only serves to emphasize how illogical many consider Stalin to have been because of his extraordinary self-delusion.

Since Stalin left behind no memoirs – only a bloody trail of corpses and a repressive police state – we'll never know his true thoughts in the months leading up to the June 1941 German attack. However, it seems irrefutable that he was convinced that Hitler would not dare launch an attack against the Soviet Union while Great Britain still held out. Indeed, Hitler's decision to strike east while an English dagger was still poised at his back shocked even the Nazi dictator's own generals. According to Pleshakov, Stalin stated, "Hitler and his generals are not so foolish as to start a two-front war. The Germans broke their neck on this in World War I. Hitler would never risk such a thing."

Prior to June 22, 1941, Stalin greatly feared risking any defensive actions that might "provoke" a German attack, going so far as to forbid his air defense units to fire upon the dozens of Luftwaffe overflights in-

truding on Soviet airspace in the weeks prior to the invasion. Suspicious that Germany could use Red Army defensive actions as a pretext to justify an attack, Stalin even imagined that a cabal of Nazi generals might be planning to force Hitler into a Russian war by launching an attack on their own initiative designed to provoke a Soviet response. According to Murphy, Hitler sent Stalin a letter the month before Barbarossa suggesting the existence of such a plot and explaining that the Nazi troop buildup on Russia's border was simply "troop exercises." Addressing the rumor that the massive German buildup

signaled an impending attack on Russia, Hitler wrote, "I assure you, on my honor as a chief of state that this is not the case." Apparently, Stalin believed a man who had already proved he seldom kept his word.

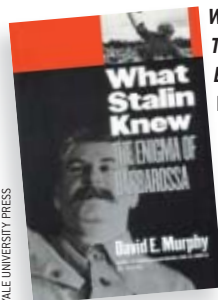
Incredibly, Stalin assumed that any Nazi attack on Russia would be preceded by an ultimatum listing the Germans' demands, and that the onslaught would be called off or postponed simply by agreeing to them. The flurry of Soviet diplomatic activity in the months preceding Barbarossa emphasized how anxious the Red dictator was to appease Hitler.

It was also no state secret that Stalin distrusted the capitalist leaders – particularly the virulently anti-Bolshevik Churchill – more than he did Hitler. When the British prime minister sent him a personal message on April 19, 1941, warning of the Nazi attack, Stalin suspected it was merely a lame attempt to rescue Britain's sagging fortunes by luring Russia into the war. According to Gorodetsky's *Grand Delusion*, Stalin showed Churchill's letter to Zhukov and remarked, "Look at that, we are being threatened with the Germans and the Germans with the Soviet Union, and they are playing us off against one another. It is a subtle political game."

Ultimately, it seems most likely that Stalin ignored the evidence and deluded himself about Barbarossa because he could not comprehend that someone else – Hitler, in this case – was calling the shots. Stalin had been playing his personal game of Machiavellian politics and single-mindedly pursuing his own diplomatic agenda for so long that he assumed only his decisions would determine Russia's fate. When the accumulating evidence suggested otherwise, Stalin simply chose to ignore it or to interpret it as supporting his preconceived notions. By its very nature, the repressive system he had created stifled dissent, punished disagreement, and prevented the careful consideration of alternative strategies in the face of the Nazi threat. That such a system permitted Stalin to wallow in self-delusion and led to the disasters of 1941 is really no mystery at all. ★

Colonel (Ret) Jerry D. Morelock, Ph.D., is Editor in Chief of ARMCHAIR GENERAL.

Recent Books



What Stalin Knew: The Enigma of Barbarossa by David E. Murphy



Stalin's Folly: The Tragic First Ten Days of World War II on the Eastern Front by Constantine Pleshakov



Grand Delusion: Stalin and the German Invasion of Russia by Gabriel Gorodetsky

A Fool for a Client

The old adage, “He who serves as his own lawyer has a fool for a client,” also applies to the intelligence field. Since Stalin insisted on acting as his own chief of intelligence, he was the only person to receive *all* reports and raw data gathered by Russia’s spies. He judged each piece of information’s reliability and usefulness, passing along to key subordinates only those items that supported his conviction that the Nazis would *not* attack. Processing the reports through the filter of his self-delusion, Stalin “interpreted” them to confirm nothing but his preconceived notions regarding Hitler’s intentions. Therefore, the Soviet dictator – his own foolish client – set himself up for the military disasters of 1941.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

German soldiers fight in the streets of a Russian seaport on the Black Sea.

Hitler’s Other Fools

Stalin was far from Hitler’s only “fool.” Many other statesmen and world leaders, at one time or another, naively trusted the Nazi dictator to keep his word. British Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin (1935-1937) staunchly refused to rearm Great Britain, despite Winston Churchill’s daily warnings in Parliament about the burgeoning threat Hitler posed. Baldwin’s successor, Neville Chamberlain, convinced himself – and much of Britain – that Hitler’s signature on the 1938 Munich Agreement was the dictator’s solemn promise for “peace in our time.” Hitler, on the other hand, cynically called it “a scrap of paper.”

After the war began, Hitler’s other fools included the American Ambassador to England, Joseph P. Kennedy, who thought Britain was doomed and advised President Franklin D. Roosevelt not to send any U.S. aid since Hitler was sure to win. Even aviation hero Charles Lindbergh fell for Hitler’s line and campaigned hard (1938-1941) to keep America out of the war.

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COMMAND DECISIONS

Eisenhower waits aboard a ship off the coast of France, June 7, 1944. At the time this photo was taken, Ike was still unsure if his invasion force had successfully penetrated Hitler's Fortress Europe.

Ike's D-Day Decision

With time running out, Eisenhower wrestled with his toughest decision of the war while the fate of history's greatest invasion hung in the balance.

While the brass deliberated, 7,000 ships, 150,000 men and 11,500 aircraft awaited Ike's decision.

At 4 a.m. on June 4, 1944, Supreme Allied Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower paced the library of Southwick House, a mansion near Portsmouth, England. Generals, admirals, and aides of his Operation Overlord command stood silently by as Ike pondered the problem before him – whether to order the invasion of Europe to proceed on June 5 or wait for better weather.

Meteorologists, led by Group Captain Dr. John Stagg, had predicted a ferocious storm for the following two days; it was already gathering strength over the English Channel. Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsey doubted the effectiveness of naval gunfire under such conditions but believed that landing craft could make it ashore. General Bernard Montgomery, the invasion-force ground commander, felt the launch should proceed as planned. Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, Ike's deputy, favored postponement. Eisenhower remarked that the horrible weather would no doubt negate maximum use of Allied airpower.

While the brass deliberated, 7,000 ships, 150,000 men and 11,500 aircraft awaited Ike's decision. Reluctantly, he postponed the invasion for a day. June 6 would be the new "D-Day" for Operation Overlord.

STORM CLOUDS

The storm arrived as Stagg's weathermen had predicted. Wind-driven rain slashed sideways at men and equipment while the sea rocked the invasion fleet. Any amphibious assault launched in such weather would have been suicide. Ike – and Stagg – had been right.

After supper Sunday evening, Eisenhower ambled back to the library. The command group was already assembled, prepared once again to weigh the invasion's fate. As before, the group would advise but only Ike could decide.

Group Captain Stagg entered the room at 9:30 p.m. with an optimistic look on his face. "I think I have found a gleam of hope for you, sir." Everyone gave a hearty cheer. The intelligence deputy, General Kenneth Strong, recalled that he had "never heard middle-aged men cheer like that." Eisenhower flashed his famous smile as Stagg explained that a "benign high [pressure]" area was forming behind a cold front and would provide a 36-hour window of opportunity. The "high" would arrive over Normandy early on June 6 and would provide "almost perfect visual bombing weather."

RISKY BUSINESS

Eisenhower polled his lieutenants. Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory was not wholly convinced; he worried that conditions were only "moderately good" for the critical airborne drop and the heavy bombers. Tedder echoed Leigh-Mallory's opinion that prospects were "chancy." The two airmen were not making Ike's decision easy. As he weighed the many risks, the Supreme Commander paced the room with his head cocked forward and his hands clasped firmly behind his back. He remarked that the Allies could still rely on their fighter-bombers since they flew closer to the

ground and were less hindered by midlevel clouds. Ramsey interjected that he believed conditions would be "satisfactory for naval bombardment." However, he warned, time was running out – if the invasion did not go on June 6, favorable tides would not appear again until June 19.

Eisenhower fired the next question at General Walter Beddell Smith, his chief of staff. "What do you think, Beetle?"

Smith responded, "It's a helluva gamble, but it's the best possible gamble."

Eisenhower then looked at Montgomery and asked, "Do you see any reason for not going Tuesday?"

Montgomery, the hero of El Alamein, replied with confidence, "I would say – go!"

OUT ON A LIMB

Ike stopped pacing and sat down on the couch with his hands folded and head bowed. Everyone present remembered the calm with which he considered the alternatives. The command group members had provided their input, now it was up to Ike to make one of the most fateful command decisions of the war. Only he bore the terrible responsibility of making the decision to send 150,000 Allied Soldiers against Hitler's Festung Europa (Fortress Europe). In a room full of people, Ike was alone.

After a few moments lost in thought, Eisenhower said, "The question is, just how long can you hang this operation on the end of a limb and let it hang there? I don't like it, but there it is. ... I don't see how we can do anything else. I am quite positive that the order must be given." The clock showed 9:45 p.m. as the weight of Ike's words

settled on the men around the table. Unless he received contradictory weather information the next morning, the invasion was on.

"OK, LET'S GO!"

The Supreme Commander spent an understandably sleepless night, rising at 3:30 a.m. At 4 a.m., the command group would review his preliminary "go" decision in light of an updated weather report.

At the appointed hour, the principals once again assembled in the library. Stagg was even more confident about his weather prediction. However, the men still had the same cautions and confidences as the night before – no one in the room had changed his mind. Eisenhower listened to the discussions as he paced the floor. He then turned toward the assembly and confidently said, "OK, let's go."

As his commanders rushed from the room, Ike was left alone to contemplate the consequences of his momentous decision. ★

Kerry Irish, Ph.D., is the author of the book "Clarence C. Dill: The Life of a Western Politician." His article "Dwight Eisenhower and the 1930 Industrial Mobilization Plan" was recently published in the "Journal of Military History."

The Unnecessary Message

Ike drafted the following message in case the D-Day operation failed. Thankfully, it was not needed.

"Our landings in the Cherbourg-Havre area have failed to gain a satisfactory foothold and I have withdrawn the troops. My decision to attack at this time and place was based upon the best information available. The troops, the air and the Navy did all that bravery and devotion to duty could do. If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt it is mine alone."

– Dwight D. Eisenhower

THE AGE OF GREATNESS THE AGE OF CHANGE THE AGE OF NAPOLEON NAPOLEON IN FACT AND FICTION

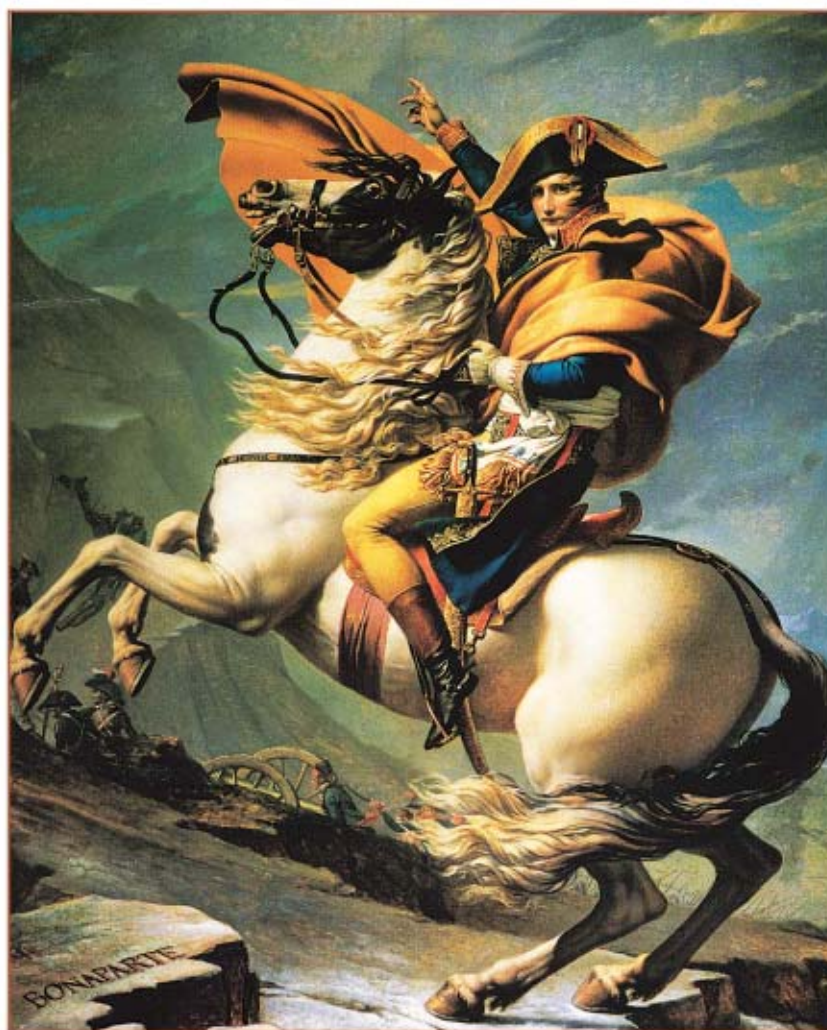
Let us present to you the real Napoleon,
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A man of remarkable ability.
The greatest soldier of his age.
A reformer who recast Europe,
spreading the principles of the
French Revolution.

A man who set the stage
for the events that created the
world of the third millennium!



Ben Weider, the creator and President of The International Napoleonic Society, receives the Legion of Honor Medal from His Excellency Denis Bauchard, the Ambassador of France in Canada. His Imperial Highness Prince Charles Napoleon attended this special event (left).



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You
Command
46



You
Command
Solution
52



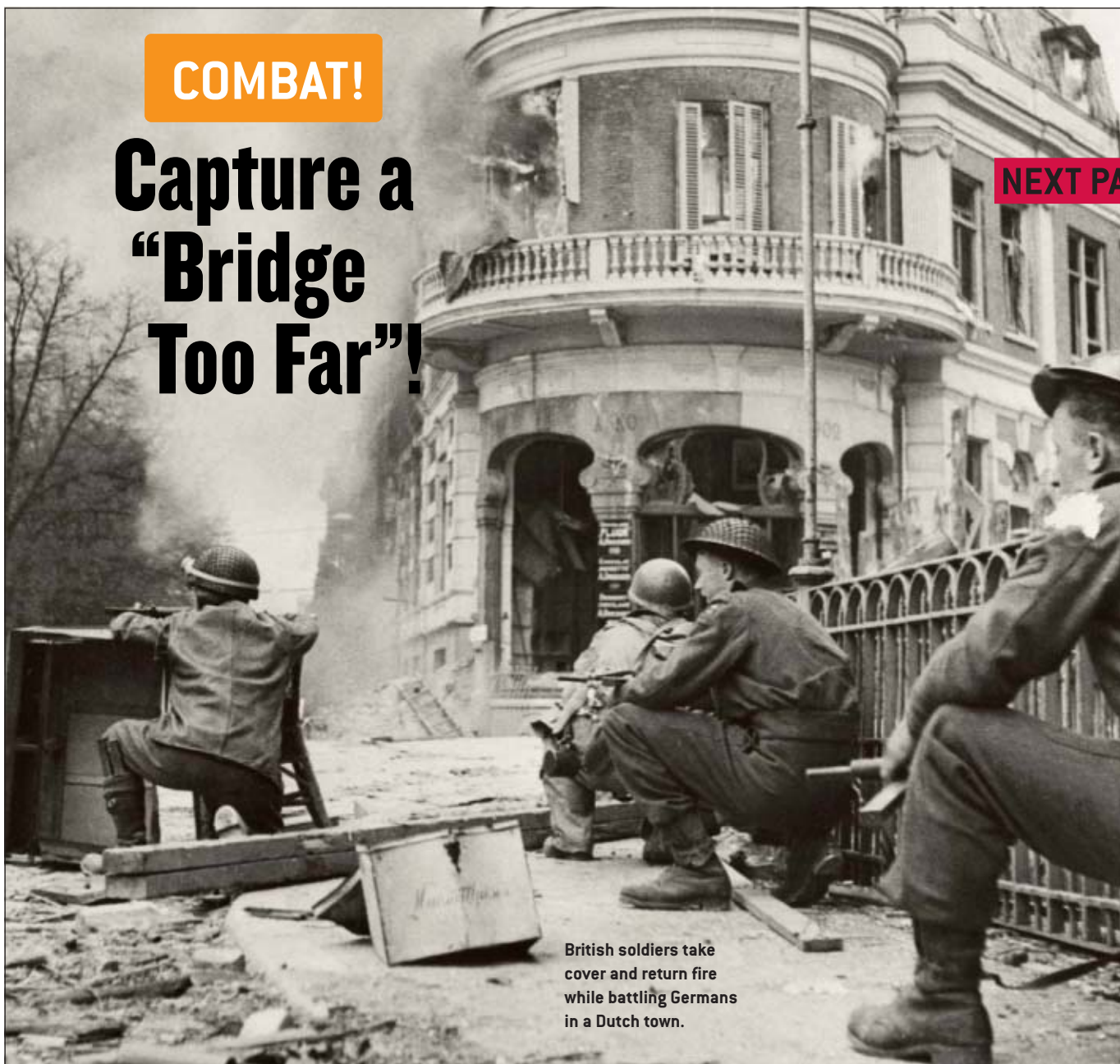
Interactive
Combat
Story
56

INTERACTIVE

COMBAT!

**Capture a
“Bridge
Too Far”!**

NEXT PAGE



British soldiers take
cover and return fire
while battling Germans
in a Dutch town.

ACG

INTERACTIVE

COMBAT!

Choose the correct course of action
as your German panzergrenadiers battle
British Red Devils during Operation
Market Garden.

You are Feldwebel (Sergeant) Karl Maertens, the leader of a hastily assembled assault squad composed of 10 panzergrenadiers. It is late Tuesday afternoon, September 19, 1944. You crouch with your men behind concrete abutments that support the south end of a bridge spanning the Lek River (Lower Rhine) in Arnhem. You are in this Dutch city because two days ago the British 1st Airborne Division suddenly landed here and now its damned “Red Devils” are fiercely defending the bridge’s north end while taking cover inside nearby buildings. You should be enjoying some well-earned rest in a quiet position far behind the front line; instead, you and your squad have been thrust into a deadly mission to recapture this all-important bridge.

Yesterday you found out just how difficult it will be to storm the British strong-points. Captain Graebner, whose bravery had recently earned him the prestigious Knight’s Cross medal, was killed as he led a desperate charge of halftracks and armored cars in an unsuccessful attempt to dislodge the stubborn Brits. Now you must succeed where Graebner failed.

You do have a significant advantage over the late captain, however. In addition to the firepower of the squad’s machine gun and rifles, General Wilhelm Bittner, commander of the II SS Panzer Corps, has provided you with two PzKw VI Tiger tanks to lead your panzergrenadiers across the bridge. The 60-ton steel

DATE/TIME:
5:30 p.m., September 19, 1944

LOCATION:
Lek River Bridge, Arnhem, Netherlands

MISSION:
Capture an enemy position and clear the way for a follow-on force

UNIT:
German panzergrenadier squad, 9th SS Panzer Division

ENEMY:
British “Red Devil” paras of the 1st Airborne Division

monsters now sit with their powerful engines idling on the roadway near your men.

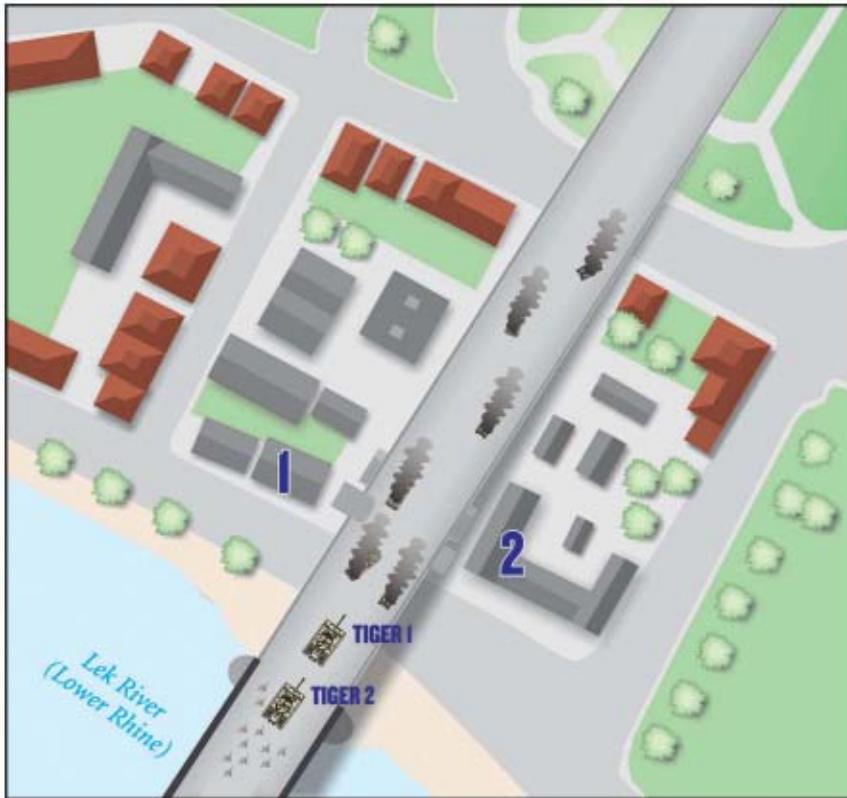
The Red Devils appear to be scattered throughout several structures, but their most important positions are the two sturdy buildings immediately flanking the bridge’s northern ramp. During yesterday’s failed assault, the greatest concentration of fire erupted from Building 1 as machine guns, small arms and PIAT anti-tank weapons blasted Graebner’s force. However, only small-arms fire came from Building 2. You believe there are about a dozen Brits in Building 2 and

probably more in Building 1.

You must devise a plan to overtake the enemy and clear the way for a follow-on force. The tank commanders and your panzergrenadiers await your attack orders!

What is Your Decision, Feldwebel Maertens?

Turn the page and listen in as Maertens briefs his men on the correct course of action.



Panzergrenadiers at Arnhem, 1944

N 0 5 10 15 20 yards
0 5 10 15 20 meters
DeRe Cartography 2006

Feldwebel Maertens

MP-40
Assistant Squad Leader
MP-40

K-98 K-98 K-98

MP-44 MP-44 MP-44

Machine-Gun Team

K-98 K-98 MG-42

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PETERSUUD

The peaceful appearance of the bridge at Arnhem in this recent photograph belies the savage fighting that transpired there in September 1944 between British paratroopers and German panzergrenadiers.

SQUAD LEADER'S ASSESSMENT OF THE TACTICAL SITUATION

Rumor has it that the British Red Devils are part of Operation Market Garden, the largest Allied airborne assault of the war – even bigger than the airdrops in Normandy before the June invasion! However, most of the paratroopers landed farther south and therefore it appears that the Brits at Arnhem are dangerously isolated from their comrades. Yet as long as they control part of the bridge, there's still a chance that an Allied column could break through and link up with them.

To wrest control of the north end of the bridge, you must first capture one of the two main buildings in which the enemy is positioned. If your squad can gain this toehold, a larger follow-on force can cross and clear out the rest of the Red Devils.

POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION

There are two ways to accomplish your mission: 1) **Deliberate Attack – Storm Building 1.** While capturing Building 1 could prove difficult, it might be worth the risk since it contains the larger concentration of British firepower and therefore poses the

greatest threat to the follow-on attack. 2) **Speed Assault – Rush Building 2.** Building 2 is the most lightly defended and thus might present your squad with the best opportunity to rapidly clear out the enemy and set up a base of fire to support the follow-on attack.

SQUAD LEADER'S BRIEFING

Speaking loudly enough to be heard over the rumbling engines, you explain to the two tank commanders, "We must quickly secure a position on the north side of the bridge and then establish a base of fire. Building 1 is too stoutly defended to allow us to swiftly storm it and clear it out. Therefore, our best chance for success is to rush Building 2."

Turning to your squad, you continue. "Stay close to the rear of the Tigers for protection as we cross. At my signal, we'll race to the southwest corner of Building 2. The MG-42 team will set up under the cover of the knocked-out halftrack. From there it will spray Building 2's windows to suppress the Red Devils while we continue our approach. At the same time, the tanks will blast Building 1 with cannon and machine-gun fire. We'll enter Building 2 through the ground-floor door and windows at its southwest corner. We'll then use grenades and small arms to clear the structure room by room, from the ground up.

"Any questions? OK, let's move out!" ★

Colonel (Ret) John Antal has authored several books and is a frequent writer for "ACG."



CORBIS

British paratroopers search for German troops in the Netherlands during Operation Market Garden.

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ACG

INTERACTIVE

YOU COMMAND

Chinese Farm, 1973

Test your decision-making skills as an Israeli division commander during the Yom Kippur War!

The fourth war between Israel and the Arab nations that surround it began with surprise attacks by Egypt and Syria on October 6, 1973 – the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur. In the Golan to the north, overwhelming numbers of Syrian troops and tanks devastated two defending Israeli brigades. However, the Israelis' stubborn stands bought time for the call up of reserves, which arrived in time to stop the Syrian advance by the afternoon of October 9.

Meanwhile, Egyptian forces crossed the Suez Canal, captured the Israeli Bar Lev defense line, and advanced into the Sinai Desert. With its unexpected ferocity, the Egyptian assault proved surprisingly successful and kept Israeli forces on the defensive. Egyptian tactical air defense and wire-guided, Soviet-built anti-tank missiles called Saggers inflicted serious losses on Israeli aircraft and armored fighting vehicles.

Yet after eight days of desperate fighting in the Sinai, Israeli armor units brought the Egyptian offensive to a standstill. Senior Israeli Defense Force (IDF) commanders, anxious to avoid a war of attrition against dug-in Egyptian infantry armed with Saggers, influenced Israel's strategic options. When the IDF Southern (Sinai) Command received intelligence reports indicating that another major Egyptian attack would be launched on October 14, it decided to let the enemy throw the first punch. Its strategy was to whittle down Egyptian tank strength even further while harboring its own forces for a massive counterattack.

The ensuing armored clash was the largest in Middle East history. Although the Egyptians had 1,000 tanks versus the Israelis' 800, the IDF held. Despite their defeat, however, Egyptian forces on the Sinai Front remained a dangerous foe.

As intended by IDF commanders, the stalled Egyptian offensive gave Israeli units precious time to rearm, refuel and reorganize. Now, if they could launch a counterattack, they could break through to the Suez Canal and provide Israeli forces with a cross-

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ing into Egypt. Success would change the course of the war on the Sinai Front.

Armchair General now takes you back to this October 1973 mission in which you will play the role of General Avraham "Bren" Adan, commanding the Israeli 162d Armored Division. You must defeat the Egyptian forces and defend the vital crossing over the Suez Canal. Israel's security – indeed, the future of your country – may depend upon your success.

Commander, prepare your men for battle!

STOUTHEARTED MEN

It is late afternoon on October 15 as the counterattack against the Egyptians and the forced crossing of the Suez Canal get underway. During the operation, codenamed Stouthearted Men, General Ariel "Arik" Sharon's 143d Armored Division is to establish and secure a bridgehead on the canal's west bank. Your 162d Armored Division's immediate mission is to follow in Sharon's wake, attack in the direction of Matzmed, and then cross the canal.

At 5 p.m., the operation opens with an artillery barrage all along the Israeli-Egyptian front line. Sharon's division attacks west to clear a corridor to a canal crossing site due

The ensuing armored clash was the largest in Middle East history. Although the Egyptians had 1,000 tanks versus the Israelis' 800, the IDF held.

east of the west bank city of Deversoir.

The forbidding terrain and the soft sand of the Sinai restrict the off-road mobility of armored vehicles. Thus, attackers and defenders alike are well aware of the critical importance of the region's few good roads. Principal routes in the area are Lexicon Road, parallel to the canal; Kaspi Road, farther east; Akavish Road, stretching from Tassa to the deserted Israeli fortress at Lakekan; and Tirtur Road, which splits off from Akavish and runs to the canal crossing point near the Matzmed fortress. (See Pullout Map between pages 48 and 49.)

Three kilometers east of the canal, Sharon's division encounters a strong Egyptian defensive position. In the ensuing combat, he suffers substantial losses in men and equipment. Heavy action continues through the night, but the Egyptians finally break off the fight. Sharon's division continues its trek, and by 8 a.m. on October 16, it establishes a 5-kilometer-deep bridgehead on the Egyptian side of the canal.

Stiff enemy resistance, however, prevents Sharon from consolidating his bridgehead. Particularly troubling are the Egyptian units on the east bank that continue to block Israeli attempts to open Tirtur, Akavish and Lexicon roads. Delays in bringing up bridging equipment threaten to cut off Sharon's forces on the west bank.

THE CHINESE FARM

By late morning, IDF Southern Command grows anxious about the fate of Sharon's force and orders your division to attack to open the roads and bring forward the critical bridging equipment.

As you approach the battle area at midday, you survey it from a distance. The intersections of Tirtur, Akavish and Lexicon form a large triangular slice of desert known as the "Chinese Farm." The farm was misnamed by Israeli soldiers who captured it during the 1967 Six-Day War and incorrectly assumed that the Japanese writing on the farm's irrigation equipment was Chinese. But the misnomer stuck, so everyone still calls it the Chinese Farm.

The grisly scene before you looks like a panorama of hell. The scarred desert is covered with hundreds of charred tanks, blasted vehicles, abandoned guns, and many bodies – the sad and awful debris of battle. Guide wires from spent anti-tank missiles spiderweb the roads.

You immediately realize what caused previous Israeli attacks to fail here. With tanks alone your countrymen tried to overrun dug-in Egyptian positions bristling with Sagger anti-tank missiles. This job clearly requires a force of tanks and infantry working together as a combined arms team. After you explain this to Southern Command, your force is temporarily augmented with an Israeli paratroop brigade.

Just past midnight on October 17, the paratroopers prove you right as they root out the dug-in enemy. Meanwhile, you maneuver your tank units to effectively deal with the Egyptian armor.

Soon, the Akavish and Lexicon road junction is open. You order the rafts moved forward and by 6:30 a.m. they reach the canal. Construction of the bridge – the vital lifeline to Sharon on the west bank – begins immediately.

In the broader battle for the Chinese Farm, the Egyptian Second and Third armies make a determined effort to close the narrow Israeli corridor. However, after two days of intense armored warfare the enemy reluctantly pulls back.

You've captured the Chinese Farm, but can you hold it? The Egyptians seem far from finished.

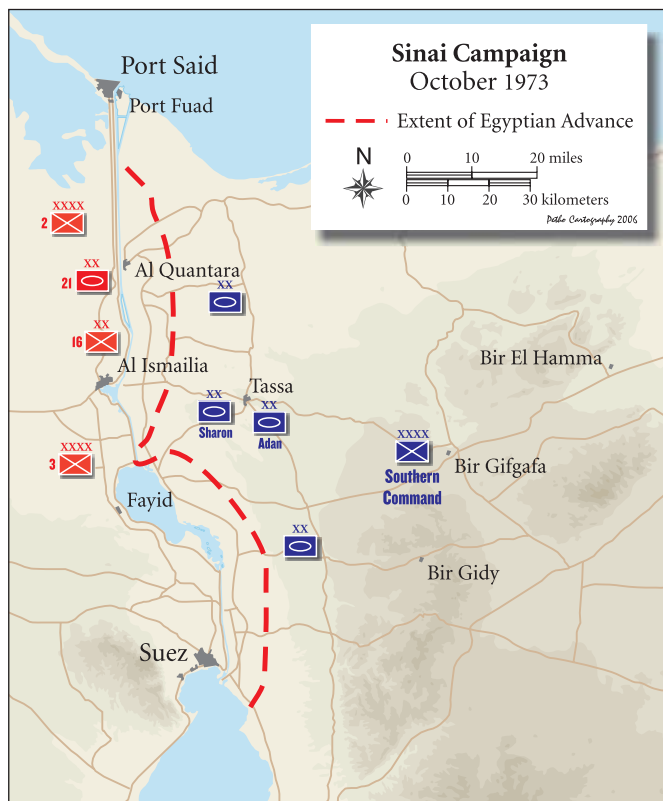
THE NEW EGYPTIAN THREAT

As you direct the consolidation of your victory, senior commanders arrive at your command post and an impromptu conference begins.

Moshe Dayan, the defense minister, considers canceling the west bank operation and withdrawing Sharon's forces. You disagree, however, and speak up, "We've just pushed back the Egyptians and are in firm command of the area. We've already released the paratroop brigade back to the control of Southern Command. The Chinese Farm is the key to protecting our Suez crossing – as long as we hold it, Sharon's west bank operation can proceed."

The others agree, but then suddenly a new threat arises. A dust cloud raised by vehicles approaching from the south has been reported. The Israeli Air Force soon confirms the report and radios that 96 T-62 tanks, numerous armored personnel carriers (APCs), and several fuel and supply trucks are advancing along Lexicon Road. It appears the Egyptian 25th Independent Armor Brigade is moving north to recapture the Chinese Farm.

To deal with this new threat, you request Southern Command to approve a reorganization of your division and the immediate return of Colonel Aryeh Karen's brigade, which previously had been held back from you to serve as the Southern Command reserve. Your request is granted;



Egypt's surprise crossing of the Suez Canal shocks the Israeli defenders. As enemy forces drive into the Sinai Desert, Israeli commanders must devise a strategy to turn the tide of war in their favor.

ACG INTERACTIVE YOU COMMAND

therefore, for the upcoming battle with the Egyptian 25th Brigade you will have a total of 139 tanks: 65 from two battalions of Colonel Nethan "Natke" Nir's armored brigade; 70 from Colonel Karen's full-strength armored brigade; and four from Colonel Amnon Reshef's tank company.

Departing the conference, you mount your command APC and rush to meet your commanders and staff. As you speed to the rendezvous point, your thoughts turn to the upcoming battle. You have confidence in your Israeli Patton and Centurion tanks, which have proved better adapted to the stalking warfare in the desert than the Egyptians' Soviet tanks. Israeli tanks can depress their main guns fully 10 degrees below the horizontal whereas the Egyptian T-55s and T-62s can only depress theirs four degrees, meaning your tanks are less exposed when firing from hull-down positions. Yours also have better range-finding equipment, and although the newer T-62s can achieve a 50-percent hit probability at 1,000 meters, your older tanks can do so at 1,800 meters.

You must formulate a plan to maximize these advantages; however, time is short. The Egyptian brigade's lead elements have already passed by Botzer. West of Lexicon, between the road and the Great Bitter Lake, is an Israeli minefield that restricts Egyptian maneuver to the road's eastern side.

Upon your arrival at the meeting point, you see that the staff and your brigade commander, Natke, are already assembled. The command climate you've established in your division is one that encourages honest and

frank feedback from your officers; you know they won't pull any punches when critiquing the plans you've developed. This is exactly what you need as you consider your tactical options.

Your operations officer spreads a map across the hood of a World War II-vintage U.S. jeep and everyone crowds around it as you stride over to the vehicle.

"No time for pleasantries," you announce. "Let's get down to business. The Egyptian units to our north have been stopped cold and are no longer a threat to us so we must concentrate our efforts on the new threat that has developed and is approaching rapidly from the south."

The men lean forward and listen intently as you explain the situation and present to them three possible courses of action.

COURSE OF ACTION ONE:

DEFEND

"The most obvious course of action," you tell them, "will be to defend against the Egyptian attack from more or less our current positions. Since Colonel Nir's two battalions are already deployed near the intersection of Akavish and Lexicon roads and Colonel Reshef's company is at Lakekan, this plan will give us a fairly strong position from which to meet the advance. By digging in our tanks to take advantage of their superior ability to deliver effective fire from hull-down positions, we will hold a critical edge over the Egyptian tanks."

"I've instructed Colonel Karen's brigade, which is being released from Southern Command reserve, to come as soon as possible via Kaspi Road to take up a position on the far east of our defensive line. However, if he arrives too late and we are already engaged, then I intend to have his forces attack the enemy's right flank."

Natke speaks up immediately. "This plan gives the initiative to the enemy! Even with the potential flank attack by Colonel Karen, the Egyptians will be able to maneuver against us at will while we are forced to sit in our holes and wait for them!"

Your operations officer then chimes in. "While I agree with Colonel Nir about the Egyptians having the tactical initiative *if* they choose to use it, under this plan it is *we* who have chosen the terrain for the battle. This not only means that we'll be well dug in, but



CORBIS

A Soviet-built tank, similar to the ones used by Egyptian armored forces during the Yom Kippur War, is dug into a "hull-down" position in which only its turret and main gun protrude above the surrounding desert. Israeli tanks held a distinct advantage in such positions since their main guns could depress farther than those of the Egyptian tanks and were subsequently less exposed to enemy counterfire.



Israeli tanks race across the Sinai Peninsula toward the Suez Canal. The Yom Kippur War started with a combined assault by Egyptian and Syrian military forces against Israeli positions on the Suez Canal in the Sinai and the Golan Heights in the north.

The farm was misnamed by Israeli soldiers who captured it during the 1967 Six-Day War and incorrectly assumed that the Japanese writing on the farm's irrigation equipment was Chinese.



WHEELER NIK/CORBIS SYGMA

ACG INTERACTIVE YOU COMMAND

also that we'll be able to rain accurate artillery onto the Egyptian column."

Natke shakes his head but holds his tongue as he waits to hear your other options.

COURSE OF ACTION TWO:

AMBUSH!

"The second course of action," you say, "will be to take advantage of the superior intelligence we possess and ambush the Egyptians. We know exactly how many tanks they have and that they are deployed in march order as they approach us. They, however, do not yet know precisely where our units are located or where along Lexicon Road their advance units will encounter us."

As your officers nod their agreement, you continue, "Crafting an ambush will require repositioning by Nir's two battalions. However, if we begin immediately we should be able to conceal his tanks in positions along Lexicon Road south of the Lakekan fortress well before the Egyptian lead elements arrive.

"Nir's tanks will tie in with those of Reshef's company, which will be in hull-down defensive positions blocking the road farther north at Lakekan. Furthermore, I will order Karen to continue moving his brigade south along Kaspi Road until he strikes Lexicon east of Botzer. This will put him in the rear of the Egyptian brigade, blocking the enemy's retreat from the ambush. When the Egyptian commanders – and more important, their soldiers – realize they are taking fire from several directions, they will likely panic."

"What makes you think the Egyptians will panic?" Natke interjects. "They've fought surprisingly hard since they crossed the canal, haven't they? This isn't 1967 – or even 1956. They've already shown us that they've learned a few things since their earlier defeats. Don't you think Egyptian commanders know that the best way to get out of an ambush is to drive straight through it as rapidly as possible? Colonel Reshef will be blocking Lexicon Road to the north with only a company. He could be overrun if the Egyptians press on. And what about Colonel Karen's brigade? You can't be positive that it will arrive near Botzer in time to cut off the enemy."

Once again, your operations officer weighs in. "Although Colonel Nir makes



Israeli military leaders confer in the war room of the Southern (Sinai) Command during the Yom Kippur War. Well established on the west bank of the Suez Canal by October 19, 1973, Israeli troops pushed south to wipe out anti-aircraft missile sites, convoys, armor and airfields in Egypt.

some valid points, the impact of our surprise will surely increase the effectiveness of our tanks' guns when they open up on the enemy. The only way the Egyptians will be able to escape is for their entire column to know exactly what to do and to press forward immediately after the initial shock of the ambush sets in. This can only be accomplished by troops who are well-drilled in *exactly* what to do in case of an ambush without having to await specific orders. While it's true that the Egyptians have fought well, they have not yet displayed such a high level of tactical precision. And as for Colonel Karen's brigade, even if it does not arrive in time to completely block the southern end of the enemy column, it will surely get there in time to strike at any Egyptians fleeing south from the ambush."

COURSE OF ACTION THREE:

ATTACK!

"A third possible course of action," you continue, "will be to take the fight to the enemy. As the Egyptians approach in road march order up Lexicon Road, Colonel Nir's brigade will lead off in attack formation moving south. In this movement to contact, his men will likely first encounter the lighter Egyptian reconnaissance forces sure to be at the head of the enemy column. Nir's tanks will blast the recon vehicles off the road and send the survivors streaming back down Lexicon in panic. This will help disrupt the enemy's main units far-

ther back in their column, making them easier to defeat. As Colonel Karen's brigade arrives along Kaspi Road, I will order it to join the attack from the east."

"Now, that's a plan!" Natke roars enthusiastically. "We grab the initiative. By blocking the northern part of Lexicon Road and striking the Egyptians farther south, we keep their column as far away from our Suez Canal crossing site as possible. When Colonel Karen arrives, the Egyptians will already be in disarray and he can just pitch in on their eastern flank. The enemy commander will be forced to either retreat south or try to fight two forces converging on him from different directions. I like it!"

"Yes, it is a bold plan," your operations officer concedes, "and Colonel Nir will strike the enemy hard. Yet we may be giving up a critical advantage by moving our tanks out into the open for an attack. We can't fight the Egyptians hull-down if we are driving along the road to meet them. Moreover, what if attacking their recon elements actually disrupts *our* attack? If they fight hard enough to disperse our leading units, then we'll be vulnerable to the follow-on Egyptian main forces."

You close the discussion by thanking the officers for their frank input. Now it's time to weigh all the factors and decide which course of action your division will follow.

General Adan, what are your orders? ★

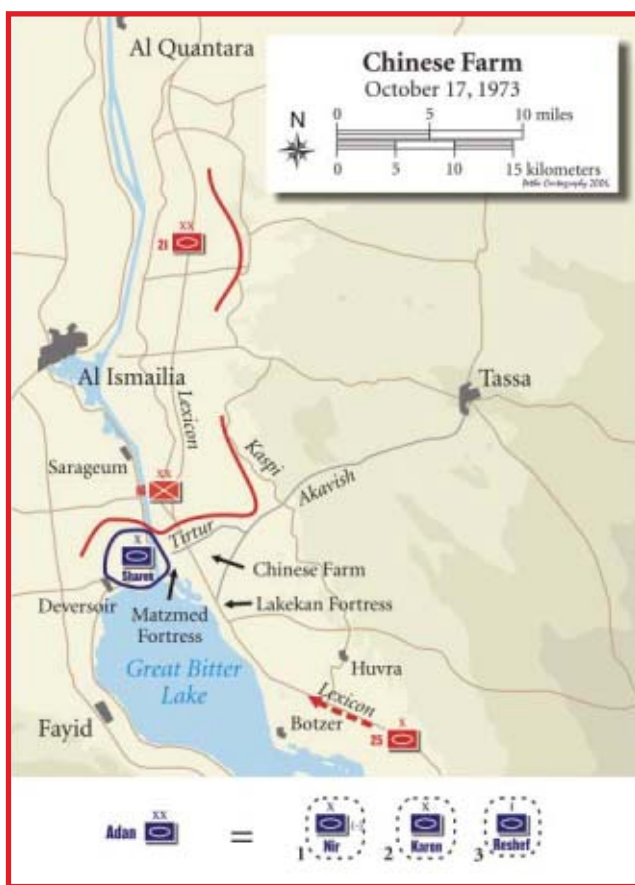
Richard Armstrong has written numerous military affairs articles for historical and professional journals and is the author of "Red Army Tank Commanders" and "Red Army Legacies."

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**Combat Decision
Game (CDG) #14**

**CHINESE FARM,
1973**

Reader Solution

- ☐ **COA 1: DEFEND**
Defend from current positions
- ☐ **COA 2: AMBUSH**
Strike from concealed locations and unexpected directions
- ☐ **COA 3: ATTACK**
Launch an attack against the advancing enemy
- ☐ **OTHER COA**
You have an alternative course of action in mind

Commander, you have various options to consider for this mission. Check the box next to the Course of Action you choose and draw your solution on the map. On the reverse, explain your solution in the space provided (200 words max).

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ACG INTERACTIVE YOU COMMAND SOLUTION

Guadalcanal

Historical outcome and winning Reader Solutions to CDG #12, January 2006 issue.

The January 2006 issue of *Armchair General* presented readers with the Combat Decision Game “Guadalcanal.” This CDG placed you in the role of Lieutenant Colonel Merritt “Red Mike” Edson, commander of the 1st Marine Raider Battalion at the Battle of Guadalcanal, 1942. The Raiders’ mission was to defend the Marine foothold on the island – particularly the vital landing strip, Henderson Field – against massive attacks by a Japanese enemy determined to annihilate the Americans at any cost.

HISTORICAL OUTCOME

The campaign to capture and secure Guadalcanal to transform it into a launching pad for the Allies’ long road back against Japan in the Pacific Theater took several months of hard fighting. It eventually involved thousands of U.S. Army Soldiers as well as the Marines who first invaded the island and stoutly defended it against vicious Japanese counter-attacks aimed at dislodging this first American foothold in the Solomon Islands.

The Marines’ initial defense suffered from a lack of critical supplies such as food and medicine. Because the Imperial Japanese Navy hotly contested control of the seas surrounding Guadalcanal, the U.S. Navy found itself hard-pressed to maintain a steady flow of vital materiel across the beachheads and into the hands of the American ground troops.

Edson’s Raiders and the other units defending Guadalcanal were wracked by tropical diseases and weakened by hunger even be-

fore they were called upon to defend “Bloody Ridge” against what turned out to be the most powerful Japanese attacks encountered by the Americans fighting on the island. Edson’s defense proved to be a “near-run thing” in part because of the high number of casualties his Marines had suffered during earlier enemy attacks in addition to the many men who were incapacitated by disease.

Although Japanese forces on Guadalcanal also suffered severely from hunger, disease and lack of supplies, they were masters of light infantry tactics in the harsh jungle environment and were willing to expend the lives of their men in fearsome and bloody “Banzai!” mass attacks.

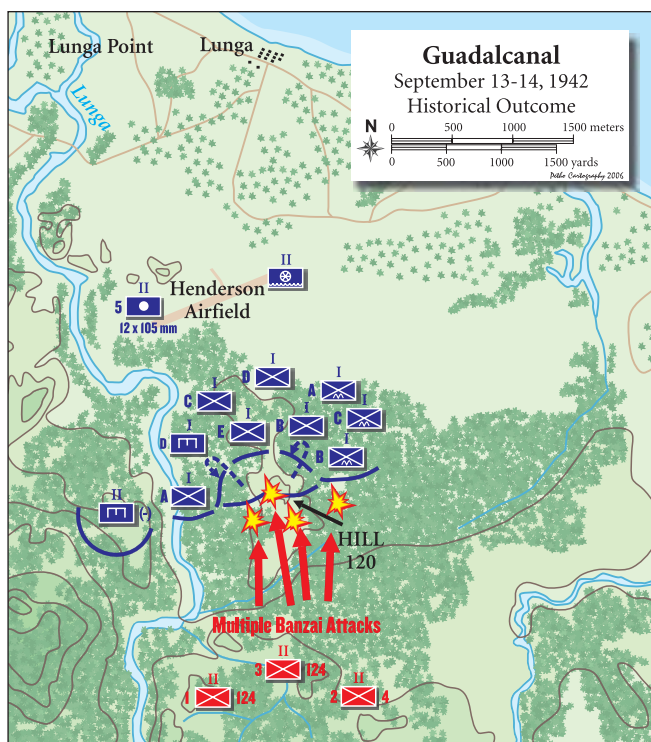
Yet as samurai sword-wielding Japanese officers led their men in these frenzied offensives, Marines (and subsequently U.S. Army Soldiers) discovered that the banzai attacks were actually double-edged swords for their enemy. While a banzai charge could possibly overwhelm isolated or weakly held defensive positions, it also brought the Japanese out

into the open where the full effect of American firepower could be brought to bear on the massed enemy formations. Thus, the most common result of a banzai charge was a bloody and relentless slaughter – of the Japanese attackers.

BLOODY RIDGE

In anticipation of an impending Japanese attack on September 13, 1942, Lieutenant Colonel Edson decided to deploy his Raiders, Para Marines and engineer units in defensive positions designed to present a “new face” to the enemy (Course of Action Two). Edson knew that previous enemy assaults had disclosed his Marines’ former defensive locations, including those of the vital crew-served weapons such as the machine guns. Therefore, he sought to gain an edge in the upcoming battle by confusing the Japanese and disrupting their attack plan.

Edson guessed correctly that the Japanese would be eager to move out of the restrictive jungle and use the relatively open terrain along the top of the ridge as a high-speed route through his lines and on to Henderson



Edson’s “new face” defensive line withstood repeated fierce banzai attacks. However, with help from their supporting artillery unit, the Marines turned the open terrain of Bloody Ridge into a deadly kill zone.

Edson's Raiders and the other units defending Guadalcanal were wracked by tropical diseases and weakened by hunger even before they were called upon to defend "Bloody Ridge."



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

November 16, 1942. Adm. Chester W. Nimitz pins the Navy Cross on Marine Col. Merritt "Red Mike" Edson, commander of the Marine Raiders who captured Tulagi, Solomon Islands, and defended Bloody Ridge. Maj. Gen. Alexander Vandegrift and Brig. Gen. William Rupertus look on.

Field, the enemy's main objective and the key to American control of the Solomons. He therefore positioned his strongest units where they could meet the most likely focus of the attack and engage it across the less restrictive terrain of the ridge top. He placed his most depleted units, in particular D Company Raiders, in more protected locations farther to the rear.

The first of more than a dozen Japanese attacks slammed into Edson's Marines about 6:30 p.m. and continued throughout the night. Heavy enemy pressure eventually forced some of the Marine units back into planned reserve positions, forming a rough horseshoe-shaped defensive line centered on the highest point of the ridge. Calling in pre-sighted artillery fire from the 12 105 mm howitzers of 5th Battery, 11th Marines, Edson capitalized on this rain of "fire from above" (Course of Action Three) to turn the ridge top into a deadly kill zone. The battery fired nearly 2,000 rounds of lethal high explosive artillery that night, supplemented by

Medal of Honor Citation for Merritt Austin Edson

For extraordinary heroism and conspicuous intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty as Commanding Officer of the 1st Marine Raider Battalion, with Parachute Battalion attached, during action against enemy Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands on the night of 13-14 September, 1942. After the airfield on Guadalcanal had been seized from the enemy on 8 August, Col. Edson, with a force of 800 men, was assigned to the occupation and defense of a ridge dominating the jungle on either side of the airport. Facing a formidable Japanese attack which, augmented by infiltration, had crashed through our front lines, he, by skillful handling of his troops, successfully withdrew his forward units to a reserve line with minimum casualties. When the enemy, in a subsequent series of violent assaults, engaged our force in desperate hand-to-hand combat with bayonets, rifles, pistols, grenades, and knives, Col. Edson, although continuously exposed to hostile fire throughout the night, personally directed defense of the reserve position against a fanatical foe of greatly superior numbers. By his astute leadership and gallant devotion to duty, he enabled his men, despite severe losses, to cling tenaciously to their position on the vital ridge, thereby retaining command not only of the Guadalcanal airfield, but also of the 1st Division's entire offensive installations in the surrounding area.

The slaughter in this kill zone ultimately broke the back of the Japanese attack.

AFTER ACTION REPORT

Defense of a Fixed Position

- Camouflage/hide defensive positions
- Presight crew-served weapons (machine guns, mortars, artillery)
- Create predesignated kill zones to trap and destroy enemy formations
- Canalize the enemy attack toward the strongest defensive positions and kill zones
- Use all available firepower to maximum effect
- Designate rally points and fallback defensive positions

aerial bombs and strafing bullets from the planes of the 67th Squadron of the Marines' Cactus Air Force. Only when reinforcements from the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines arrived to bolster Edson's line did the Japanese attacks finally stop.

The next morning, Edson's battered but victorious Marines counted over 800 enemy bodies littering the battlefield.

READER SOLUTIONS

Although Edson initially decided to configure his defense using Course of Action Two: New Face, he actually won the historical battle by reconfiguring his defense similar to that in Course of Action Three: Fire From Above. Relentless enemy pressure and subsequent desperate fighting forced his Marines from their original locations into reserve positions that, in effect, canalized the Japanese into the deadly artillery kill zone called for in Course of Action Three. The slaughter in this kill zone ultimately broke the back of the Japanese attack through the concentration there of all available fire support means, principally the artillery fire of 5th Battery.

Therefore, our judges looked for Reader Solutions based upon Course of Action Three that clearly indicated recognition of the need to attain overwhelming fire support and demonstrated a basic understanding of other tactical principles for conducting a successful defense of a fixed position.

And now for excerpts from the winning Reader Solutions to "Guadalcanal" ...



November 7, 1942. A Marine looks out over Bloody Ridge, the scene of intense fighting in defense of Henderson Field during the battle of Guadalcanal. At the ridge, 800 Marines commanded by Col. Merritt Edson withstood the assaults of 2,500 Japanese.

Captain Robert Allen, 10th Mountain Division, "Greetings from western Baghdad! The Japanese possess a large advantage in numbers. The Raiders' marked advantage in firepower and effective use of fire support is decisive to defeating a Japanese attack. The Raiders should employ COA 3."

Michael Brown, Kansas, "[COA 3] will allow the battalion's mortars/artillery barrages to bleed the enemy's banzai charges. Bring in the Cactus Air Force to further reduce the enemy's forces."

Christopher Guzy, Virginia, "Option 3 neutralizes infiltration by moving our lines, [and it] funnels their human wave [attacks] into the kill zone with the two best-equipped companies and zeroes artillery on the ridge."

Thank you to everyone who participated in this CDG. Turn to page 46 and test your combat decision-making skills with CDG #14, "Chinese Farm, 1973." This tactical battle places you in the role of General Avraham "Bren" Adan, commander of the Israeli

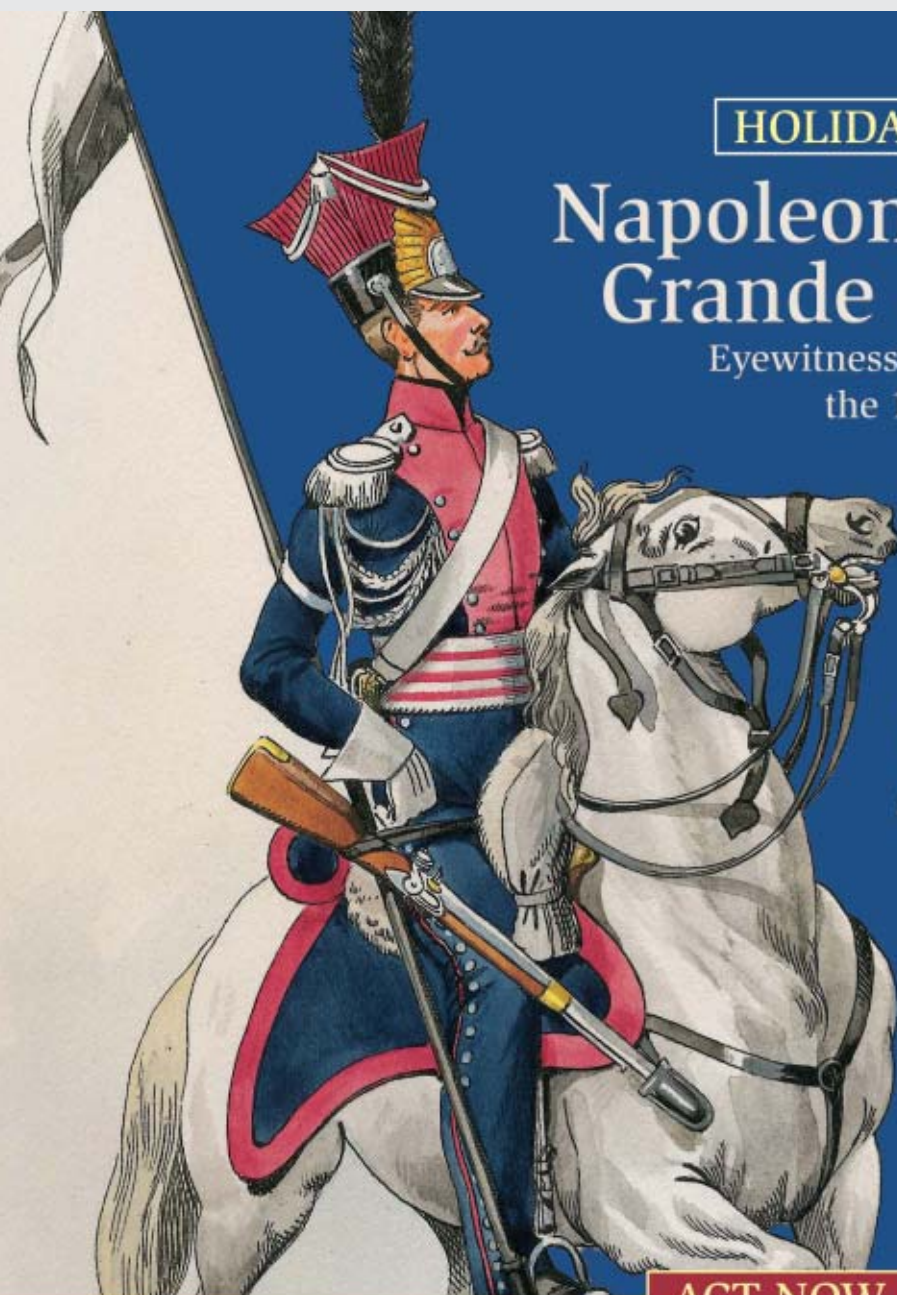
162d Armored Division, as he attempts to defeat an Egyptian counterattack in the Sinai Desert during the Arab-Israeli Yom Kippur War. Use the pullout form between pages 48 and 49 to explain your solution and mail, e-mail or fax it to *Armchair General* by April 28, 2006. Winners will be announced in the September 2006 issue. ★

Congratulations to our "Armchair Generals":
Capt. Robert Allen, 10th Mtn. Div.
Michael Brown, Kan.
Christopher Guzy, Va.
They beat out some tough competition!

HONORABLE MENTION

Christopher Allen, Texas
Col. Mark L. Brown, Hawaii
1st Lt. Vincent Caliguire,
via e-mail
Mike Dempsey, Conn.
Matt DiRisio, N.Y.
Capt. Fernando A. Franco,
34th Inf. Div.
Bud Geldmacher, via e-mail
Bill Grasso, Okla.
Steven Greaf, Iraq
Steven Gundel, Pa.
Robert Hart, Wis.
Don Heitman, Ind.
Kevin Hendrickson, via e-mail
Eric W. Jones, Ind.
Bradley King, N.C.

Aaron P. Ohnmeiss, Pa.
Dennis Pelletier, Pa.
Paul Penrod, Md.
Spc. Richard Peters,
1st Armored Div.
Dave Peyok, Okla.
Dorsol Plants III, W.Va.
Alan Quattrin, Md.
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Gregory Takeda, Hawaii
Ross Taylor, via e-mail
Lt. Col. (Ret) Chuck Treese, Colo.
Wayne R. Trovinger, Miss.
Stephen Webber, Maine



HOLIDAY SPECIAL

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Cold Steel and Iron Courage

PART TWO

Storm in the Valley

BY JOHN ANTAL

"If the Valley is lost, Virginia is lost." – Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson

It is an hour before noon on a beautiful, sunny day in the Shenandoah Valley in May 1862. Colonel Thomas S. Flournoy, commander of the 6th Virginia Cavalry, has assembled six of his officers and asked their opinions of what would be the best way for their small force to neutralize a larger Union Army.

The gray-clad Confederate leaders kneel next to an elaborately drawn map of the valley. Like thoroughbreds chomping at the bit, they require no coaxing. They have been running from the Federals long enough and are eager to go on the offensive.

Colonel Flournoy points out Front Royal on the map, a small town not far north of their current position near McDowell. The town has little more than a few dozen houses, a church and a water pump. However, it sits astride a road junction that leads to all four points of the compass. And more im-



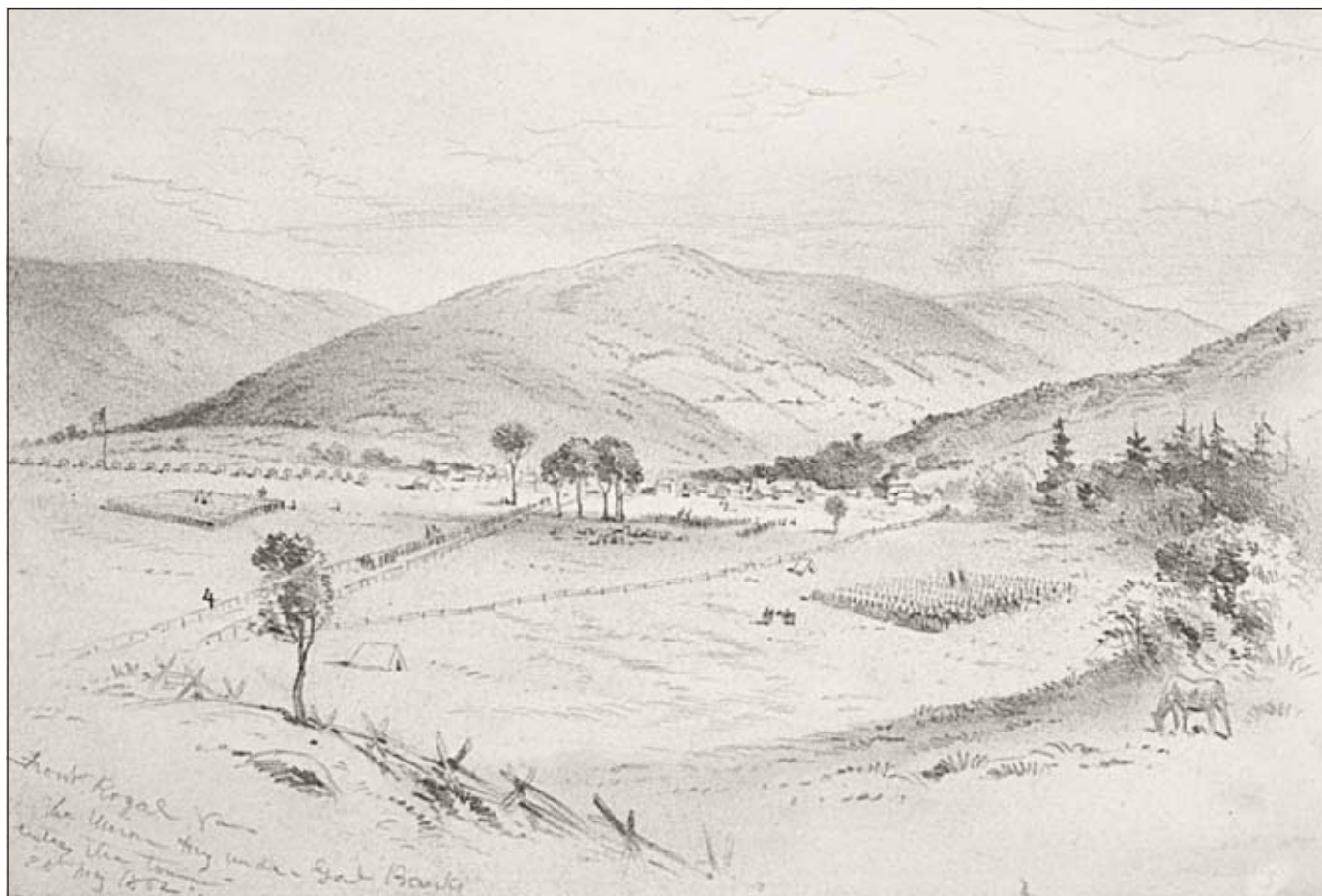
With fewer than 17,000 troops under his command, Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson successfully routed much larger Union forces in the Shenandoah Valley.

portant, a railroad line passes through Front Royal and runs to Strasburg. These two things make the town a vital prize in the game of strategy General T. J. "Stonewall" Jackson now wages against the Federal Army in the Shenandoah Valley.

"Jackson," Flournoy tells his men, "has been warned by a Virginian patriot that General Banks and the majority of his Union troops are lying in wait in nearby Strasburg. Banks has concentrated his forces there because he expects our army to advance from Harrisonburg, just southwest of New Market. He left only a small force at Front Royal, which provides us with an opportunity."

First Lieutenant George Ashton grins. This is the way he likes to fight – hitting the enemy forces where they least expect it and where they are the weakest. Glancing at the map, Ashton immediately recognizes the possibilities; but as a newcomer to Flournoy's group,

This is the way Ashton likes to fight
– hitting the enemy forces where they least expect it
and where they are the weakest.



The Union Army under Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks enters Front Royal, Virginia, in this 1862 Civil War illustration.

he is careful to keep his thoughts to himself.

Two days ago, Ashton's cavalry was dispatched from Major Jesse Greene's legion and temporarily assigned to reinforce Flournoy's 6th Virginia. The 6th is part of General Richard Ewell's division. Ewell and Jackson have moved to Luray and linked up. Now, looking for a small part of the Union Army upon which to pounce, they figure Colonel John R. Kenly's Union brigade garrisoned at Front Royal's vital rail junction will do quite nicely.

"Gentlemen, the army will attack," Flournoy announces. "General Jackson and General Ewell have assembled their divisions at Luray and are moving now to trap the Federals at Front Royal. Old Jack wants the Yankees there isolated, not just driven back."

"How many men do they have there, sir?" one of the majors asks.

"Not many," Flournoy answers. "Possibly

1,000, but they are no match for the 16,000 men and 48 guns our army has moving toward them. Colonel Ashby's cavalry and our 6th Virginia Cavalry will cross a branch of the South Shenandoah River at Luray and diverge west from the rest of the army. Our mission is to keep the Federals at Strasburg busy while Jackson takes Front Royal. Then once he is engaged, we will ride east to support him."

The officers nod, acknowledging that they understand the mission.

"Gentlemen," the colonel declares, "I know you have all met Lieutenant George Ashton." Then turning to the lieutenant, he says, "I read the report of your action at Gaither's Farm, and I know you are the right man for a special mission I have in mind."

"At your service, sir," Ashton replies.

"I want you to take your company of 26 troopers to Buckton Springs and destroy the

telegraph station there, smashing the equipment and cutting the wires. It is vital that no communications are transmitted between the Union forces at Front Royal and those at Strasburg. Here is a map of the area."

"Yes, sir," Ashton responds, taking the map from Flournoy and examining it.

"There are two bridges at Buckton Springs," Flournoy explains. "The Federals will be sure to be guarding them and the telegraph station with at least a company of 50 infantrymen. Any questions?"

"No, sir."

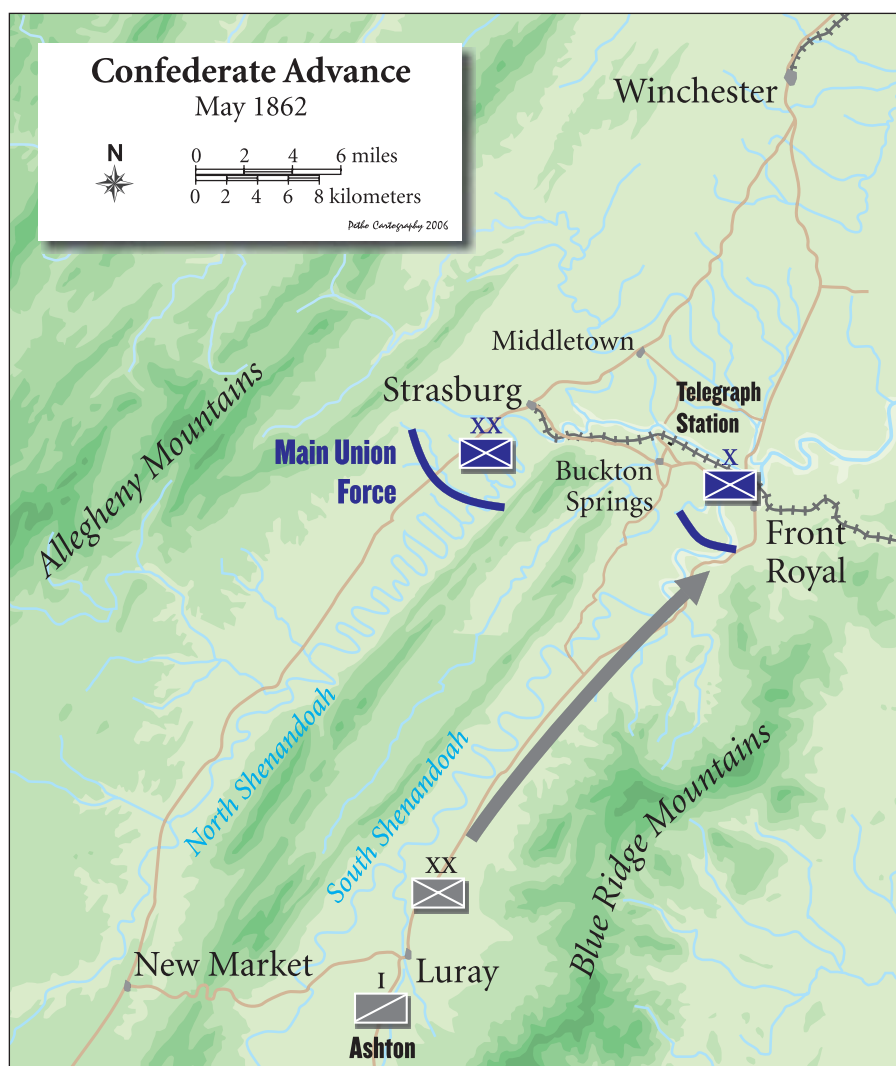
Ashton mounts his brown Morgan horse, Gabriel, and rides slowly to a nearby clump of trees where his cavalry troop is resting. As Gabriel trots forward, the lieutenant studies the map and considers how he will accomplish his mission.

Ashton can't help but wonder why his commander, Major Jesse Greene, chose to

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Strong Union forces occupy key locations in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, including the important telegraph station at Buckton Springs. Gen. Stonewall Jackson's outnumbered Confederate forces can help even the odds by destroying or disrupting Union communications.

lend him and his cavalry company to the 6th Virginia for what looks to be shaping up as a very important mission. There are certainly other, more experienced – and higher ranking – company commanders in Greene's legion whom he might have chosen.

Furthermore, not long ago Greene had reprimanded Ashton for leaving his company while he and Sergeant Jebediah Watkins went "scouting" on their own. The only thing that saved him from a scathing dressing-down – and possibly relief of command – was the fact that the outing resulted in the two men discovering a copy of a battle plan Union forces

were using in a move against Greene's legion. Taken from the body of a Federal dispatch rider the lieutenant had picked off with a dandy long-range shot, the plan alerted Greene to an impending enemy attack just in time for the legion to react and successfully defeat it.

Although Ashton and his company fought well during the engagement, he suspects that Major Greene has not entirely forgiven him for being absent without permission. Perhaps, Ashton muses, this mission is Greene's way of further testing a young lieutenant. He silently resolves that if this is the

case then he must not fail – for it is doubtful that the major will tolerate two mistakes!

Forcing his thoughts back to the task at hand, Ashton decides that there isn't much room for fancy maneuvering in this mission. A river to the north of the telegraph station blocks an approach from that direction, and a branch of it also prevents an assault from the west. Attack options are limited to advancing on Buckton Springs from the south.

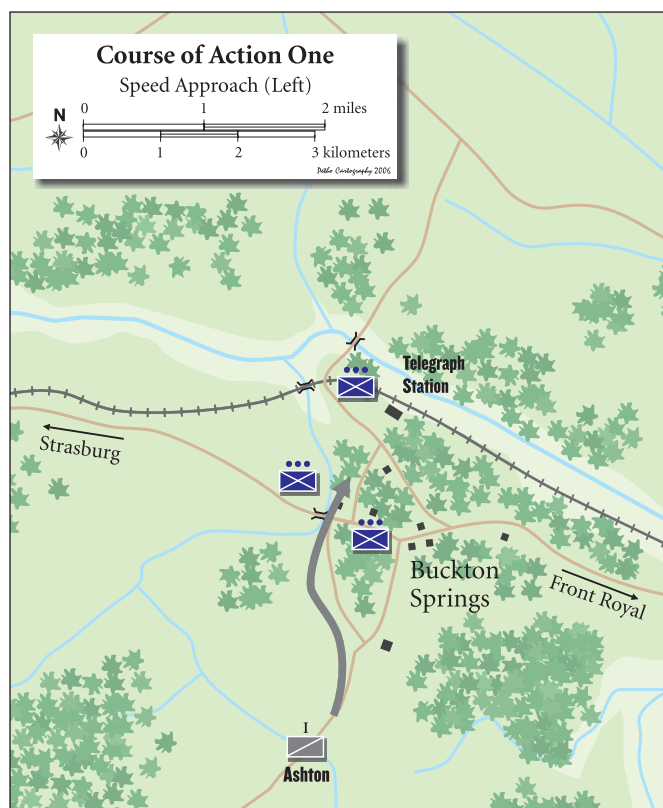
At first Ashton considers riding up to the woods south of Buckton Springs, dismounting his troopers and approaching the telegraph station on foot. However, he quickly rejects that idea. They are up against a much larger force and therefore speed is vital to their success. Moreover, his men are armed mostly with short-range carbines, shotguns and pistols that can do little damage beyond 100 yards. The Union infantry, on the other hand, carry Springfield rifle-muskets, weapons whose well-aimed fire can literally cut a man to pieces at 300 yards and kill him out to about 1,000. The Confederates therefore must find a way to get directly on top of the enemy before the Yanks even know they are coming – and they can't do that on foot.

Ashton concludes that they'll have to attack in a hell-for-leather cavalry charge. Still, key questions remain. Which route will offer the most speed when closing on the enemy? Which will give the best chance for surprising the Union infantry? And which will provide the best cover if the Federals are ready and waiting when they get there?

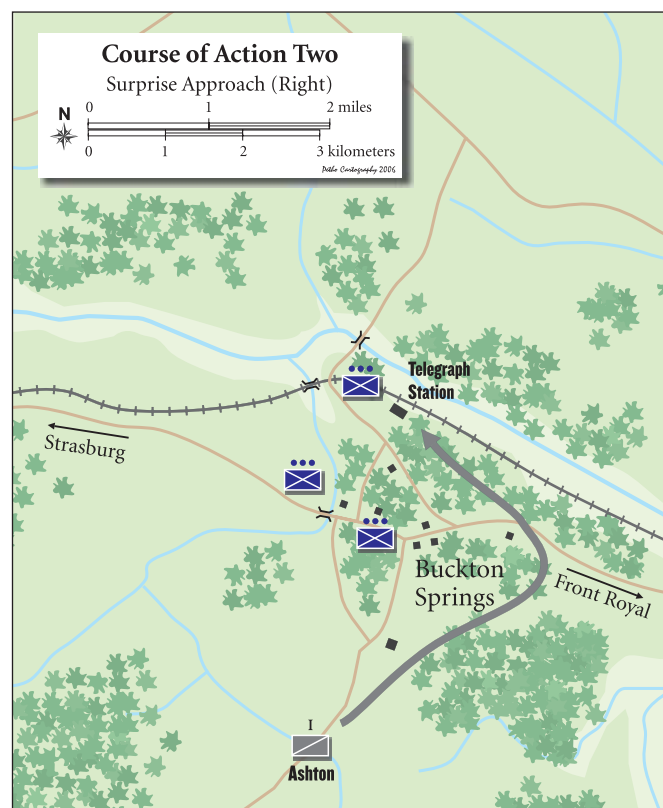
He stares at the map as if he expects a plan to leap off the page and announce itself. Finally, his thoughts begin to take shape and two courses of action emerge. Given the necessity for speed and surprise, the only feasible avenues of approach are swiftly attacking up the Buckton Springs road or stealthily cutting through the fields and woods south-east of their objective.

Course of Action One: Speed Approach (Left). Ashton figures that if he were defending Buckton Springs, he would place Soldiers in positions to defend the telegraph station and the bridges. A smart commander would also place pickets in the woods, or at least post a few guards there to provide the main force with an early warning should an enemy attempt to infiltrate the area from behind the cover of the trees. Since he is

Ashton stares at the map as if he expects a plan to leap off the page and announce itself. Finally, his thoughts begin to take shape and two courses of action emerge.



Choosing speed over surprise, Lt. Ashton will send his Confederate cavalymen up the Buckton Springs road to scatter the Union defenders at the telegraph station.



Choosing surprise over speed, Lt. Ashton will send his Mounted Rangers through the fields and woods to attack the Union defenders at the telegraph station.

most interested in speed – and tramping through the woods will likely slow his troopers' progress – Ashton feels his best bet is to send his men along the road that runs north to Buckton Springs.

He will move his cavalymen onto the road where they will charge at full gallop, taking the left branch at the fork and skirting to the left of the woods. From there they will attack toward the telegraph station, secure the area, enter the building, smash the equipment and then cut the outside wires. Once this is accomplished, he and his men will rendezvous with General Jackson's force at Front Royal.

Course of Action Two: Surprise Approach (Right). Ashton believes that while attacking along the Buckton Springs road will afford his company the greatest speed, it also will diminish the chance for surprise because the Federals are likely to be particularly alert for any movement from that direction. Clattering up the road in a thundering

charge would be like ringing an alarm bell.

On the other hand, the ground southeast of the woods is prime farmland, and at this time of year it will be prepared for spring planting. So although an approach through the fields will slow his Mounted Rangers, the horses' hoofbeats will be muffled by the soft dirt, offering a better chance to take the garrison unawares. Perhaps the element of surprise can make up for the loss of speed.

Under this course of action, the Confederate horsemen will pass through the fields and then rush northwest between the gap in the woods. From there they will charge toward the telegraph station, secure the building, destroy the equipment and cut the communication wires. Once this is accomplished, the company will link up with Jackson's force at Front Royal.

Ashton glances up from the map and sees Sergeant Jebediah Watkins walking toward him.

"Well, Lieutenant, are we goin' to be wait-

in' or are we goin' to be fightin'? Some of the men think we may be held as the reserve since we ain't part of the 6th Virginia."

"Don't worry Jeb," Ashton says with a broad smile. "We drew the prize mission. Before the day is over you'll have all the fighting you ever wanted."

"Yee-hah! That's all I need to hear," Jeb replies. "I'll gather the men for orders." He whistles shrilly, and soon the 26 Mounted Rangers are assembled around their leader for instructions.

Looking into the faces of his men, Ashton tells them, "Our mission is to raid the telegraph station at Buckton Springs, destroy all the telegraph equipment and cut down the

If you choose for Lieutenant Ashton to take **Course of Action One: Speed Approach**, turn to

PAGE 60

If you choose for Lieutenant Ashton to take **Course of Action Two: Surprise Approach**, turn to

PAGE 62

ACG INTERACTIVE ICS

PAGE 60 YOU CHOSE COURSE OF ACTION ONE: Speed Approach

Ashton's Rangers move out in a column of twos with the lieutenant at the right front and Jeb at his side. The company's bugler, a 17-year-old lad named Sam, rides behind Ashton. Two horsemen gallop ahead to act as scouts.

The ride north is pleasant and the weather is beautiful. For a while, George Ashton forgets about the war. As they near Buckton Springs, however, Jeb rouses him from his daydreams.

"Scouts are comin' our way," the sergeant announces then spits tobacco juice on the dusty trail.

Behind the approaching scouts, Ashton can see the woods that lie southeast of their objective. Not a Federal is in sight and there's no sound of alarm or battle. He raises his right hand, halting the troop. One of the scouts trots up next to him, stopping his mount with a quick jerk of the reins.

"Lieutenant," the scout calmly states, "the Yankees must be asleep. We saw no picket line in the woods. We can move to the left of the trees and get onto the road, as you planned, without so much as a 'how do you do' from the Yanks."

Jeb flashes a big, toothy smile. "Like lambs to the slaughter."

Ashton leans back in the saddle and faces his men. "Column of fours. Keep as quiet as you can. Once we reach the road, ride like hell.

"Sam, no bugle calls until I raise my sword to signal full gallop, then give me the charge, son."

"Yes, sir!" Sam replies.

"OK, God be with you all. Let's ride!" Ashton orders. The heft of the saber in his hand and the strong, steady stride of his mount reinforce his confidence.

The horses are warmed up by the time the cavalrymen reach the hard-packed dirt road. Before they have been on the road very long, Ashton spots a group of blue-clad infantrymen milling about near

the first bridge. Most are relaxing under the trees, their rifle-muskets neatly stacked nearby. *Perfect*, he thinks.

Ashton raises his saber and twirls it in the air. Sam enthusiastically blows the charge. The bugle's notes echo against the trees as the Mounted Rangers thunder up the road. Like ants in a hill that has just been kicked over, the Union Soldiers scurry about looking for their weapons. The Rangers are on top of the first panicked mob before the Federals can squeeze off a single shot. Slashing left and right, the lieutenant strikes several blue-clad men while Sam continues to sound the charge.

The Confederate force quickly reaches the telegraph building and Ashton sees that the 8-foot-tall wooden doors of the high-walled structure are wide open. He watches as Union Soldiers rush inside to grab their rifles.

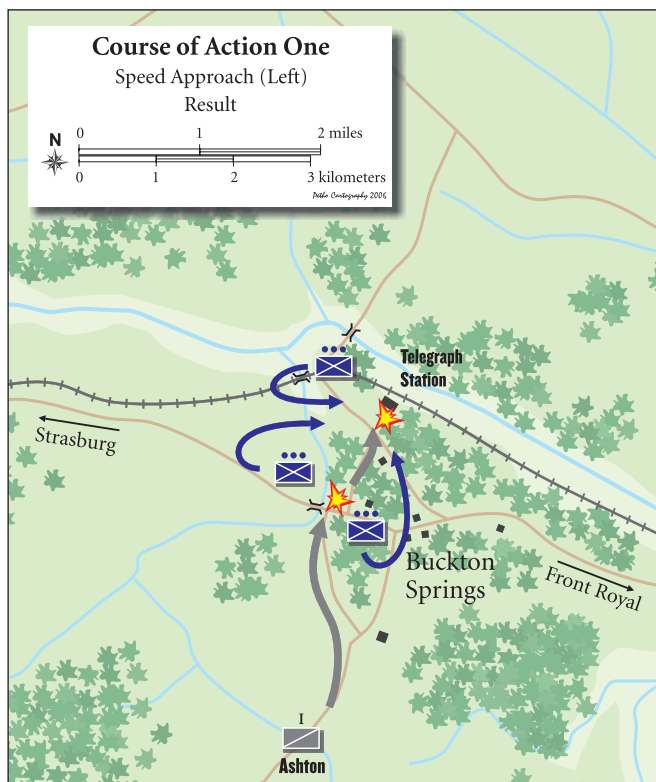


Suddenly, an unexpected volley of fire knocks Sam and another trooper from the saddle. Ashton spurs Gabriel up the porch steps and ducks before riding right into the telegraph station. Union Soldiers jump out the open window to the rear. Sliding down from his saddle, the lieutenant pulls his rifle from its scabbard and uses it to smash the telegraph key. Jeb and several other Confederates dismount and enter the building to destroy the rest of the equipment.

Outside, the sound of musket fire increases to a roar. Bullets whistle through the air and smack into the station, splintering its wooden walls. Ashton realizes that the shock of their attack is quickly wearing off. The bold charge scattered the Federals but clearly didn't defeat them; they've regrouped and are counterattacking. Ashton has lost the chance to complete the mission by cutting down the extensive network of wires blanketing the area.

A corporal shouts to him, "Sir, give me 15 minutes and I can gather a few of our men and cut down the main telegraph wires."

Ashton snaps back, "No, we don't have



The speed of Ashton's attack scatters the Union defenders, but they quickly rally and initiate a counterattack.

“We didn’t ride into this nest of Yanks just to turn tail and run.”



Ashton smashes the telegraph equipment vital to Union communications as Watkins subdues a Union Soldier in the background.

time for that now. The Yankees recovered more quickly than I had planned. We have to get out of here – fast!”

The trooper looks at the lieutenant with surprise. “Sir?”

“You heard me,” Ashton bellows. “The Yankees are counterattacking. Time is everything in war, and we can’t stay here any longer. Mount up!”

As Ashton swings into the saddle, Jeb questions his decision. “Lieutenant, are you sure we don’t have time to cut down those wires.”

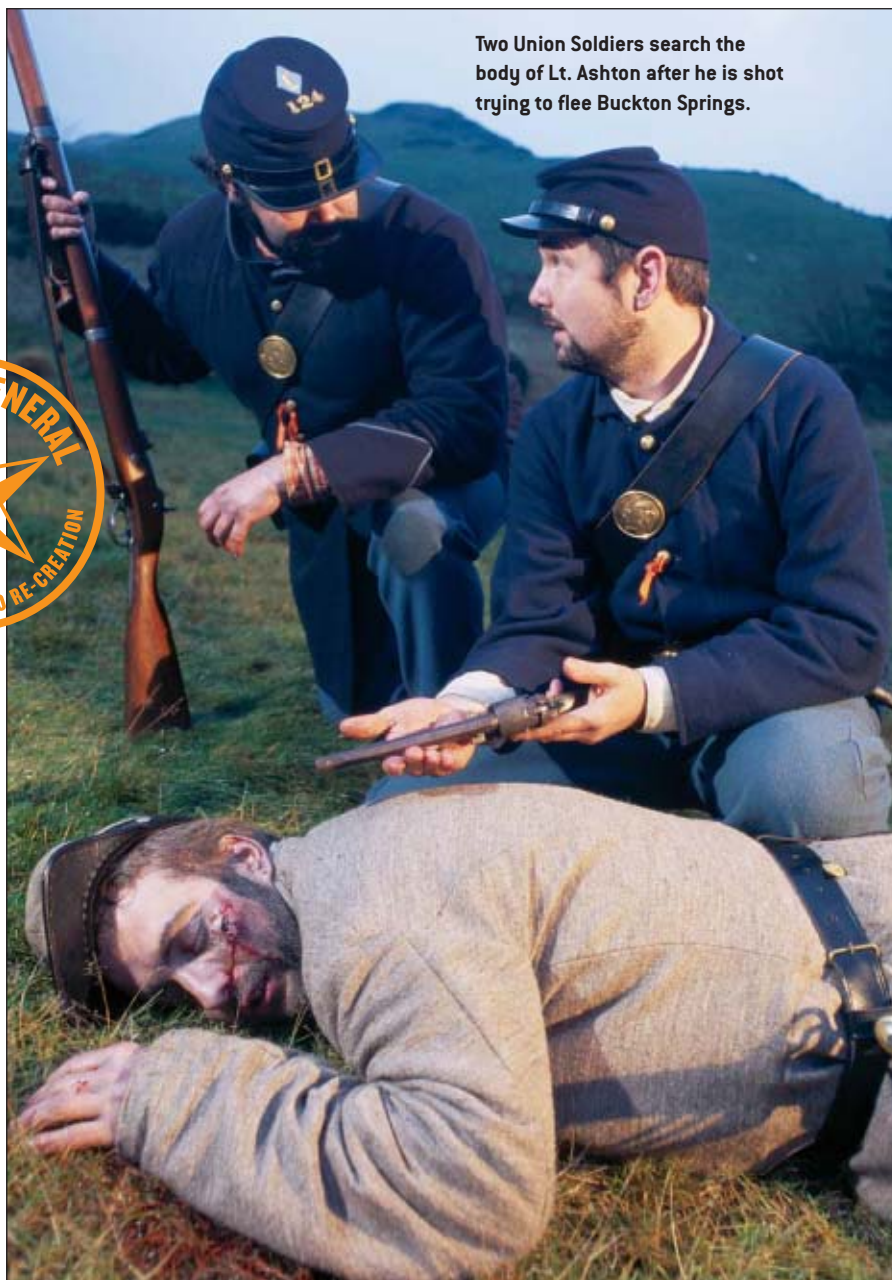
“No, we’re heading east at a gallop. Everyone mount up!”

“And leave with only half our mission accomplished?” Jeb asks disbelievingly. “We didn’t ride into this nest of Yanks just to turn tail and run.”

“Enough,” Ashton snaps. “We’re leaving. That’s an order, Sergeant!”

Jeb spits a thick stream of tobacco juice onto the floor in front of the lieutenant and then waves his hand, signaling the horsemen to withdraw.

Once mounted, the men fire their weapons as they gallop east toward Front Royal. They leave behind them their wound-



Two Union Soldiers search the body of Lt. Ashton after he is shot trying to flee Buckton Springs.

ed comrades – and a half-completed mission.

Ashton departs directly behind his men. As he spurs his horse on, a squad of Union infantrymen rushes up behind him and begins firing. Bullets buzz through the air like hornets. Suddenly, one strikes the lieutenant in his side. Incredulous, he moves his hand to touch the wound. Several more Federals appear and add to the gunfire. Gabriel rears, causing Ashton to lose his stirrups and fall heavily to the

ground. The last thing the lieutenant sees before he dies is the face of the Union Soldier who shot him.

Speed is important in warfare, but it must be balanced against accomplishing the mission at hand. Although Ashton succeeded in part of his mission, the Union forces were only scattered – not defeated – and he was killed in their counterattack.

Turn to page 62 and read Course of Action Two.

ACG INTERACTIVE ICS

PAGE 62 YOU CHOSE COURSE OF ACTION TWO: Surprise Approach

The Mounted Rangers gather their weapons and head north in a column. Two Soldiers gallop ahead to act as scouts.

After a while, the men reach the newly plowed fields south of the woods at Buckton Springs. Ashton marvels at how little sound they are making as they steal closer to the Federal position. Before setting out, he had Jeb make sure that every man in the command had securely tied down anything that might make the slightest noise.

"Thanks to your handiwork and this soft ground, we're like a company of gray ghosts," Ashton whispers to the sergeant.

Just then, the two scouts reappear. Like the rest of the command, they make no unnecessary noise as they rein up in front of their commander.

"Sir," the chief scout reports, "the Yanks have no pickets in the woods. Heck, from what we can tell they're mostly just lounging around the telegraph station. They clearly have no idea that we're here."

Smiling broadly, Ashton sends the scouts to the rear to join the rest of the column. Turning to Jeb, he says softly, "Let's see how close we can get before those Yanks stumble upon the fact that they have company."

He leads his men to the woods southeast of Buckton Springs and halts them there as he scans the area for signs that the enemy has been alerted. Wisps of smoke rise lazily from the chimney of the telegraph station, and a banjo can be heard somewhere in the distance. A Union Soldier walks slowly into the building; he does not appear to be carrying a musket.

Ashton cannot believe his luck. Just as the scouts reported, the Federals are unaware of his command's presence. He silently signals for the men to form up in battle line. Once the troopers are side by side, he draws his saber and points to the telegraph station.

"At the trot!" he orders, tapping Gabriel with his spurs.

The Rangers deftly move through the trees, closing the distance to the garrison.

"At the gallop!" Ashton shouts as they reach the north edge of the tree line. Once they are near the station, he yells, "Charge!"

Sam, the young bugler, brings his instrument to his lips and sounds the charge. Like a thunderclap, the Confederate horsemen fall upon the unsuspecting Federal Soldiers. Blue-clad men scatter left and right in surprise and panic.

As his Mounted Rangers quickly surround the milling mob of Federal Soldiers, Ashton spurs Gabriel up the station's steps and ducks right through the two 8-foot-tall wooden doors of the high-walled structure. The five men inside rush to grab their mus-



Ashton brandishes his sword in the face of the Union officer in charge and demands the immediate surrender of his troops.

kets. One of them, a Union officer, draws his pistol and levels it at Ashton. Lunging forward with his saber, the lieutenant knocks the pistol from the man's hand and points the blade at his head. The Yank scrambles fearfully back against the wall as Ashton moves closer, holding the saber just inches away from the man's nose.

"Tell your men to put their weapons down and surrender, or I will kill you where you stand!"

"I am duty bound to defend this station," the Union officer bravely replies.

Ashton studies the man's face and realizes that he recognizes him – he knew him as an instructor at West Point.

"Mister Philips," Ashton says slowly with a smirk, "my terms are that you will leave all your weapons and I will let you march with your men to Strasburg."

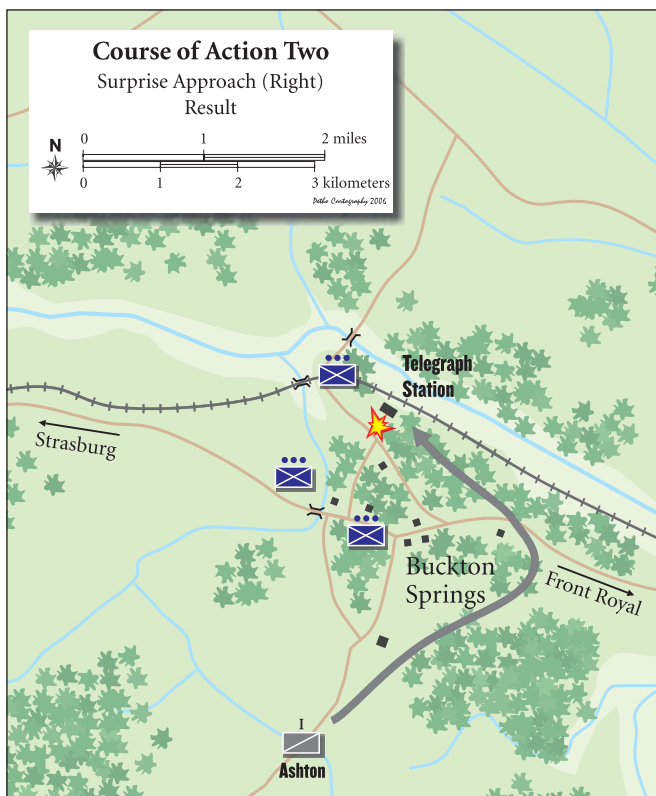
"You know my name?" the officer asks, surprised.

"I was a plebe, class of 1860, when I made your acquaintance. But do not try my patience, sir. What is your decision?"

"I accept your terms," Philips answers, sighing heavily.

"You may keep your saber, but all your Soldiers must stack their arms in front of the station."

Philips nods in response, resigned to his defeat.



Ashton's Mounted Rangers completely surprise the Union garrison, forcing the entire unit to surrender.

*Sometimes, one must “go slow”
in order to “move fast.”*



Ashton and Watkins verify their scouts' reports.

“Do you have a surgeon here?” Ashton inquires.

“I do, and I will have him tend to your wounded as well as mine.”

With a flourish, Ashton pulls the saber away from the man’s face and says graciously, “I thank you, sir, and I do hope that the next time we meet, our situation will be more pleasant.”

Philips salutes with his own sword and then follows the lieutenant as he carefully rides Gabriel through the station doors. Once on the porch, Philips shouts loudly, “Men! You have all been surrendered. Put down your weapons!”

Ashton orders his cavalymen to collect the Federals’ firearms. He tells five Soldiers to form up the Union prisoners and stand guard over them, and then directs Jeb to send several troopers inside to destroy the rest of the communications equipment.

“I don’t want anything left behind that the Yanks may be able to use. Set the men to work cutting down the telegraph lines in the area. Pull down the poles, pile them up and burn them. Since we’ve captured the entire garrison, we have plenty of time to do a thorough job.”

With his usual grin, Jeb says happily, “Don’t worry, Lieutenant. These boys know how to bust things up right proper, you just watch. I don’t think we need to worry about the Yanks sendin’ telegrams askin’ for reinforcements any time soon.”

“Right,” Ashton agrees. Surveying the scene, he adds, “I think Major Greene will be very pleased.”

Sometimes, one must “go slow” in order to “move fast.” Lieutenant Ashton won a stunning victory by using stealth to surprise and overwhelm the Federal garrison. His slow but silent approach to the enemy’s very doorstep allowed his charge, delivered at point-blank range, to

“shock and awe” the much larger Union force.★

Colonel (Ret) John Antal served 30 years in the U.S. Army and commanded combat units from platoon to regiment. He has published over 50 magazine articles and six books, including “Armor Attacks,” “Infantry Combat,” “Combat Team” and “Proud Legions.”

**Catch the next episode of
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in the July issue of**

**ARMCHAIR GENERAL
on newsstands May 23.**

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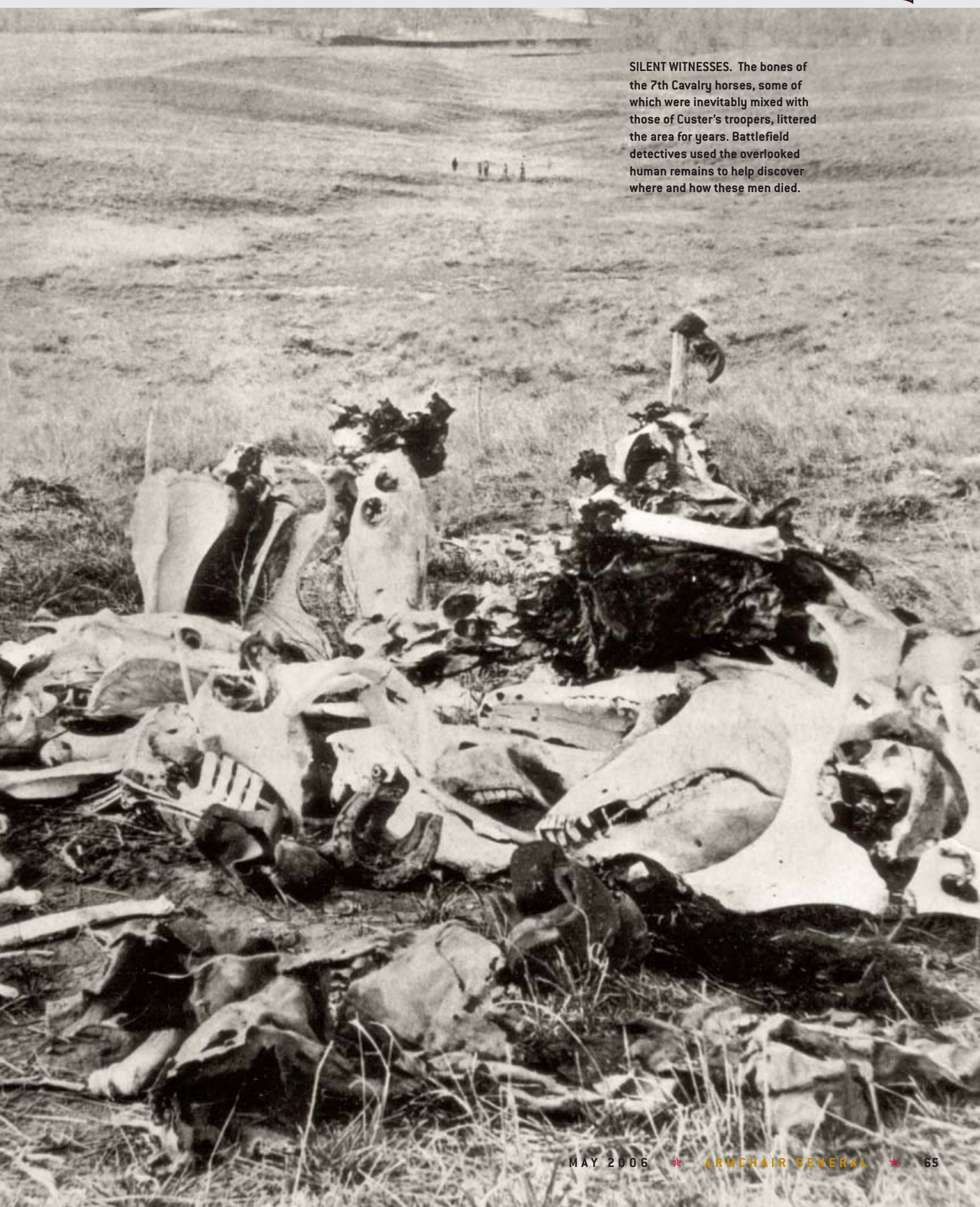
BATTLEFIELD DETECTIVE

THE CASE OF CUSTER'S LOST SCOUT

BY DOUGLAS D. SCOTT

**Dedicated sleuths use all the
tools of modern forensic
archaeology to solve a
130-year-old murder mystery.**

NATIONAL ARCHIVES



SILENT WITNESSES. The bones of the 7th Cavalry horses, some of which were inevitably mixed with those of Custer's troopers, littered the area for years. Battlefield detectives used the overlooked human remains to help discover where and how these men died.

BATTLEFIELD DETECTIVE

The gun smoke and dust slowly cleared from the hills surrounding the Little Bighorn River late on Sunday afternoon, June 25, 1876, revealing the lifeless bodies of 210 Soldiers and perhaps 50 dead or wounded Lakota and Cheyenne warriors. That evening, the families of the dead warriors gathered the remains of their relatives and buried them with appropriate ceremonies in their camps along the river or elsewhere away from the field of battle.

Two days later, surviving members of the 7th U.S. Cavalry Regiment buried their dead. Somewhere among these remains were those of the famed scout/interpreter Mitch Boyer, a man of mixed Sioux and French fur-trader ancestry. Before the encounter at the Little Bighorn, Boyer tried in vain to warn Custer that the fight into which they were heading was bigger than the cocky cavalryman anticipated. However, Custer ignored Boyer's sage advice and pressed the attack in the face of impossible odds. After the battle, the gruesome results of his decision lay scattered over the Montana hills.

A Battle and a Mystery

Those who attempted to identify the mutilated Soldiers prior to their hasty burial gave conflicting reports regarding the location of Boyer's body. In fact, the question of where Custer's "lost scout" actually fell remained unanswered until the advent of modern investigative techniques.

For the many people fascinated by the story of the American West's most famous battle, there are broader implications to identifying Boyer and his burial site aside from finding him and properly laying him to rest.

When Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer led his men to their deaths on that hot June afternoon, he left a legacy that is still partly shrouded in mystery even after nearly 130 years of scholarly research and speculation. The 210 men who gave their lives fighting alongside Custer included the members of five 7th Cavalry companies (C, E, F, I, and L), Custer's small headquarters staff, and four civilians. In all, five members of the Custer family died that day: Custer himself; his brother Captain Tom Custer, commander of C Company; his brother-in-law Lieutenant James Calhoun; his youngest brother, Boston; and his 18-year-old nephew, Harry Armstrong "Autie" Reed. The latter accounted for two of the slain civilians; the other two (unrelated to Custer) were Mark Kellogg, a newspaper correspondent, and Mitch Boyer.

Contrary to popular belief, not all the members of Custer's vaunted 7th Cavalry died that day. Nearly four miles to the south, 350 of the regiment's men under the command of Major Marcus Reno and Captain Frederick Benteen survived two days of hard fighting. Reno's command had dug in on the bluffs overlooking the north bank of the Little Bighorn River and was besieged there by 700 to 900 Lakota and Cheyenne warriors. Wondering what had happened to Custer and anxiously awaiting word from him, the men created a tight perimeter by digging rifle pits and entrenchments with the tools they had on hand. They held their ground until a relief column commanded by General Alfred Terry and Colonel John Gibbon arrived in the valley on June 27. The Lakota and Cheyenne fled the field on the evening of June 26 when their scouts told them of the advance from the north.

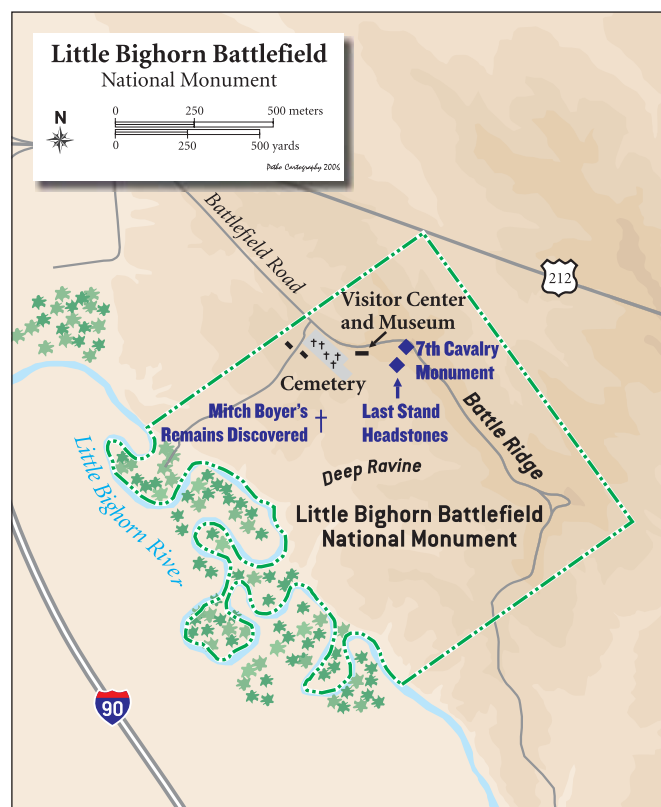
Ever since the arrival of Terry's column, one question has persisted: *What really happened to Custer and his men?*

Burying Custer's Dead

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument was set aside as a national cemetery in 1879. Since 1940, it has been one of the U.S. National Park Service's many sites that commemorate significant events in American history. Little Bighorn Battlefield is unique because it is the only battlefield in the world to mark the precise location where each man was believed to have been killed – not just where he was buried or memorialized – with a marble marker that states, "U.S. Soldier fell here, June 25, 1876."

But virtually since the moment the last trooper was laid to rest, an enduring interest – a genuine mystery – has existed concerning the accuracy of the markers. For many Custer and Little Bighorn aficionados, it is simply a matter of intellectual curiosity. But for serious scholars, knowing the precise location where each person fell can provide invaluable information about how the battle was fought.

The eyewitness testimonies of the Soldiers who buried the dead, as well as Native American oral histories, often conflict with one another regarding who was initially buried at which spot on the battlefield. Personal accounts of the battle, some recorded 40 or 50 years after the fact, also disagree in the particulars of the fighting. Therefore, it is ex-



Mystery Solved. Battlefield detectives identified the remains found at markers 33 and 34, just below the ridge that forms the north side of Deep Ravine's primary drainage area, as being those of Custer's lost scout, Mitch Boyer.

When researchers superimposed the facial bones from the excavation over the only known photograph of Mitch Boyer, they obtained an excellent correlation.

tremely important to find a means to vet these accounts to determine which are accurate. One way to accomplish this is to corroborate eye-witness testimony with an independent line of evidence. If a witness reliably remembers where a particular body was found, then other elements of the person's testimony are likely to be accurate as well.

The identification of the civilian scout Mitch Boyer is a case in point. For decades, controversy swirled because at least six witnesses claimed different locations for his remains. For instance, Private Peter Thompson declared that he located the scout's body on the west side of the Little Bighorn River. However, Sergeant Daniel Kanipe claimed that Boyer was buried in Deep Ravine on the river's opposite side. Colonel John Gibbon of the relief column stated, "The body of our poor guide Mitch Boyer was found lying in the midst of the troopers slain, as the Sioux had several times reported they had slain him in battle." Yet another witness, the Crow scout White-Man-Runs-Him, stated vaguely that Boyer's body was discovered "on a ridge."

Such disagreement, however, is understandable given the condition of the remains when they were observed on June 27 by a reconnaissance patrol from Terry's column. Most of the corpses had been stripped of their uniforms and nearly all had suffered some sort of mutilation ranging from scalping to dismemberment. Aided by Terry's Soldiers, the survivors of the Reno-Benteen command buried the dead over the next two days, interring each man at or very close to the spot where they thought he had fallen. Lacking proper tools and pressed by the possibility that the hostile Indians might still be in the area, the burial details hurriedly covered the bodies and then marked the necessarily shallow graves with crude wooden stakes cut from discarded lodge poles found in the abandoned Indian camps.

Identifying Custer's Troopers

A number of the bodies were identified based on physical features or, in the case of those who were not completely stripped, by personal effects. The probability of accurate identification was no doubt influenced by the victim's rank and length of service. Officers and higher-ranking enlisted men were better known and thus more likely to be recognized by their surviving comrades than were recently recruited privates. Once identified, the victim's name was written on a slip of paper and inserted in a spent cartridge case that was then either placed with the body or driven into the marking stake.

The reliability of these identifications is difficult to assess. Clues to facial recognition, such as habits of expression, are of course lost in death (this accounts for the frequent misidentification of the dead by close relatives even today). In the case of Custer's men, devastating wounds, perimortem disfigurement, and the bloating, discoloration and decomposition that resulted from several days' exposure in the scorching summer weather added to the difficulty of identifying the remains and inevitably increased the likelihood of errors.

In fact, some bodies were entirely unrecognizable. For example, one of the surviving troopers of the Reno-Benteen hilltop fight was unable to find his own brother, Private George W. Hammon of F Company, among the scattered corpses. The bodies of three officers (Lieutenants Harrington, Porter and Sturgis) were never identified. Custer's brother Tom was so badly mutilated that he was recognized only by a unique tattoo on his forearm.

The Army further complicated matters by sending burial details to the battlefield in 1877 and 1879 to reinter any remains exposed by the elements or by predators. Then in 1881, another detail disinterred all the Soldiers' remains and reburied them in a single mass grave. This mass grave now surrounds the granite memorial shaft erected at the top of Last Stand Hill.

Marble Mystery

In 1890 – 14 years after the battle and nine years after the Soldiers' remains were moved to the mass grave – Captain Owen Jay Sweet and an Army detail traveled to the battlefield to erect marble headstones to commemorate the precise locations where Custer's Soldiers fell. These are the same marble markers that now dot the battlefield and make the site so unique. However, some of the markers actually created yet another mystery.

Sweet brought along 249 headstones, approximately the number of all the Soldiers slain during the battle (Custer's 210, plus those killed with Reno-Benteen). Yet the captain placed 246 of them in the region where only Custer's troopers fell – which was too many markers given the number of men who actually died there. But what led Sweet to make such a mistake? Battlefield detectives have at last solved this mystery.

In the area where Custer's men fought, Sweet placed 43 of the marble markers in spots that exhibited side-by-side depressions in the ground. He assumed these "paired" locations were evidence of two shallow graves, believing them to be the poignant final resting places of "bunkies" – men who bunked together in the



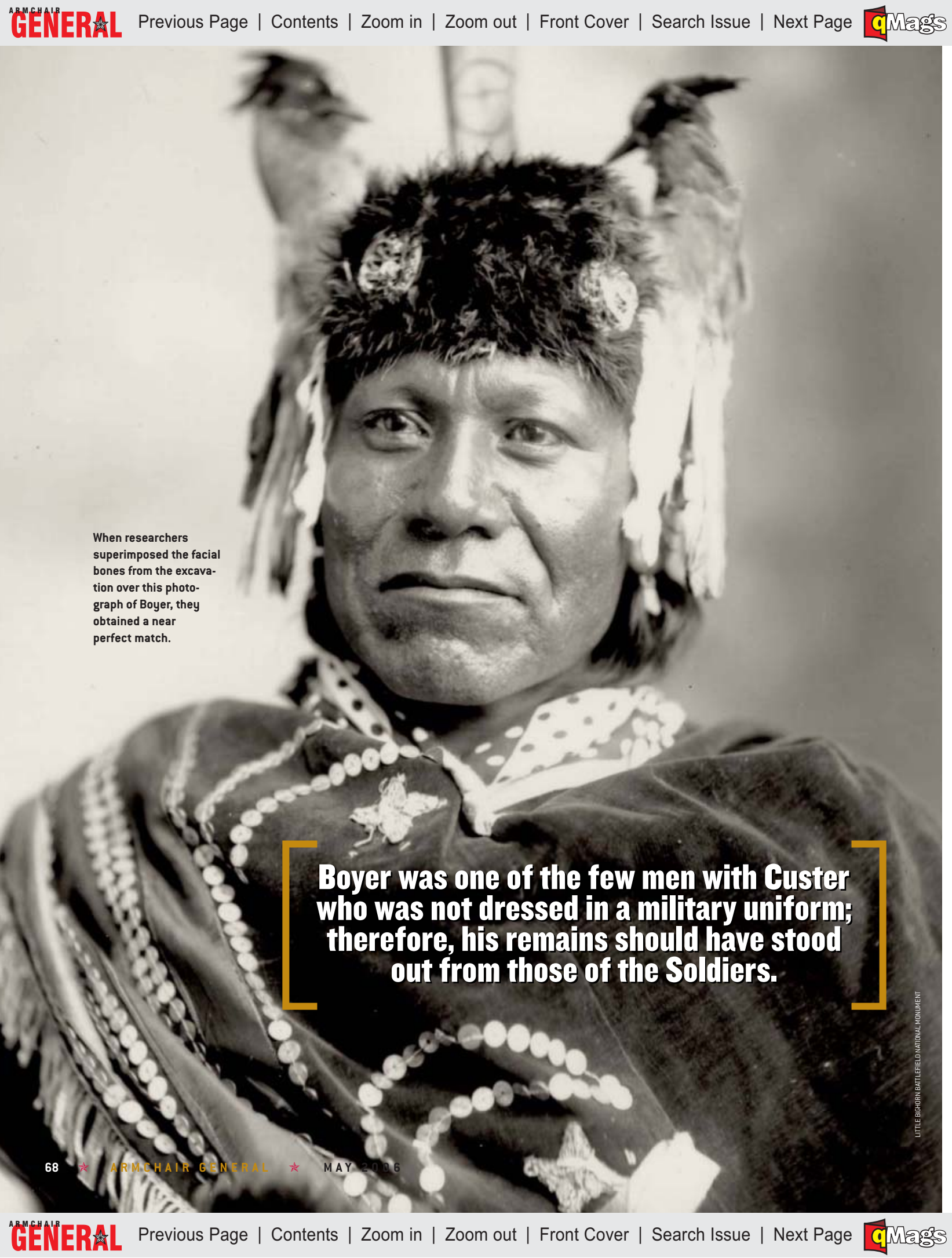
Taken about 1875, this is the only known photograph of Mitch Boyer.



Found by archeologists, these facial bones indicate that they belonged to an individual who was male, of mixed Native American-Caucasian ancestry, and who smoked a pipe – each characteristic of Mitch Boyer.



Boyer's photograph, with the facial bones superimposed, demonstrates how modern forensic techniques can aid in identification of old remains.



When researchers superimposed the facial bones from the excavation over this photograph of Boyer, they obtained a near perfect match.

Boyer was one of the few men with Custer who was not dressed in a military uniform; therefore, his remains should have stood out from those of the Soldiers.

Lt. Col. George A. Custer, as he likely appeared when he met his end at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. One of the most photographed figures of the American Civil War and western frontier eras, Custer posed for this image – one of the last taken of him – shortly before leading his 7th Cavalry Regiment in the 1876 campaign against the Lakota and Cheyenne in Montana.

CUSTER BATTLEFIELD MUSEUM, GARYOWEN, MT, WWW.CUSTERMUSEUM.ORG

BATTLEFIELD DETECTIVE

barracks and then, loyal to the end, decided to meet their fates together. Forensic science, however, has discovered a less romantic but much more likely explanation.

The “testimony of the spade” – bone fragments and other artifacts – revealed that each pair of markers actually represents only one Soldier. The original 1876 burial detail simply scooped dirt from both sides of the deceased and piled it on top of the single set of remains. This expedient procedure left a shallow indentation on either side of the actual grave. So although Sweet placed pairs of markers at nearly two dozen locations, modern forensic investigation showed that only one trooper fell at each of these places.

Bones Never Lie

Another legacy of the Little Bighorn is written in the bones of the troopers overlooked by the burial parties and still lying in the silent earth of the battlefield. Since 1984, a series of archaeological projects in the area has yielded thousands of recovered objects. However, for reconstructing the day of the battle, nothing has proved more important to battlefield detectives than the remains of the Soldiers they found buried there. Physical anthropologists have discovered that bones make good independent witnesses. They often “speak” softly, but they never lie and they never forget. Each one has its own tale to tell about the past life and violent death of the trooper whose living flesh once covered it.

Like people, some bones divulge their secrets more readily than others. Some offer subtle clues that can only be interpreted by a trained professional using precise measurements or technical skills like radiology or DNA analysis. Others exhibit patterns that are so obvious they practically write their own story, particularly



Marble markers such as this one at the top of Calhoun Hill help make the Little Bighorn Battlefield unique. It is the only battlefield in the world showing the precise locations where Soldiers died.

when there is evidence of injuries from gunshots, sharp force or blunt-force trauma.

Often, anthropologists can even derive a complete life history – an “osteobiography” – from a skeleton. This is because bones, which appear as dry and inert objects in the laboratory, form part of a very dynamic tissue system in the living body, and many significant events in an individual’s biological history leave evidence in the skeleton. Hence, a study of it can reveal an individual’s age, sex, ancestry and physique, as well as the more subtle evidence of old disease and injury, growth and hormonal disturbances, nutritional stresses, and other biological vagaries encountered in the long – or sometimes short – journey to the grave.

Finding the Lost Scout

During a preliminary archaeological investigation of the Custer battlefield in 1983, human remains were discovered at a location situated between Last Stand Hill and Deep Ravine. The soil had eroded from the bones leaving them exposed, so in 1984 excavations recovered the remains to prevent any further loss through erosion. Researchers found at the site a few river cobbles, a .50-70 caliber Springfield rifle bullet, a lead bullet fragment, lead shot, a boot heel and boot nails, a rubber button, three trouser buttons, a mother-of-pearl shirt button, and a deteriorated wood fragment that was likely part of a stake used by one of the burial parties to identify a Soldier’s grave.

The bones found at the excavations included skull fragments with a few teeth still intact, part of a hand, some vertebrae and a tailbone. The deceased individual appears to have been a male between the ages of 35 and 45 at the time of his death. The facial structure suggests a

Silent Testimony

Battlefield Detectives at Work

Douglas Scott’s fascinating book *They Died With Custer: Soldiers’ Bones From the Battle of the Little Bighorn* is an insider’s look at the techniques modern battlefield sleuths use to “coax history” from the dry and broken remains of long-dead Soldiers. As Scott notes, “Although dead men tell no tales, their skeletons whisper entire life stories.”

The methods provided by today’s archaeological and forensic science – in

conjunction with hundreds of hours of painstaking analysis – allow researchers to discover not only how Custer’s troopers died but more importantly how they lived.

As Scott explains in his book, “Living bone supports the body. It protects the brain, creates the shapes in the human body. After death, bone and teeth are the last remaining tissues. When the muscles and skin are dust, the bone remains. Bones tell stories about the body and person they represent ... a softly spoken tale of a person’s dietary habits, diseases

suffered, injuries endured, and sometimes something of the manner of death and what happened after death.”

Human bones, the locations where they are found, and the artifacts discovered alongside them provide battlefield detectives with the clues they need to solve some of history’s most enduring “murder mysteries.” *They Died With Custer* is an absorbing and informative must-read for anyone interested in a behind-the-curtain glimpse at the actual workings of these real “crime-scene investigators.”

Thanks to the efforts of battlefield detectives,
a 130-year-old murder mystery has been solved.

Caucasian/Mongoloid ancestry. The wear on the teeth and their yellow tint indicate that he was a pipe smoker. The vertebrae show signs of arthritis, an all too common condition of frontiersmen of that era. The only injury evident on the remains is blunt-force trauma to the head.

As for this person's manner of dress, the mother-of-pearl shirt button suggests he wore Euro-American clothing, not an Army regulation uniform. Bullet fragments in the area signify that he was likely shot at with the type of weapons used by the Indians during the battle – probably a shotgun, an unidentified firearm type, and a Model 1866, 1868 or 1870 Springfield rifle. At some point, his head was smashed with a blunt instrument such as a war club.

In all, the clues gleaned from the excavations suggest to battlefield detectives that this particular set of remains are those of a part-Indian civilian who fought and died with Custer's troopers. The only known individual in Custer's immediate command to fit that description is the scout Mitch Boyer, who was about 38 years old at the time of the battle. The signs of pipe smoking, the civilian clothing, and the age derived from the bones each are consistent with Boyer's characteristics. However, these things are still only circumstantial evidence. To identify the remains more positively, battlefield detectives had to dig a little deeper.

New Techniques Help Solve a Mystery

Fortunately, in this particular case facial bone fragments were available to aid the identification process. These fragments consisted of the left side of the cheek, a partial left eye orbit, and the front teeth and nasal cavity. By using the relatively new technique of photographic superimposition – comparing pieces of bone to a known photograph of a person – the potential for positive identification exists.

Superimposition techniques require a good knowledge of anatomy and a skilled camera or computer operator. First, images of the skull or skull fragments are placed in the same plane and orientation as the photograph to which they are being compared. Once a properly oriented bone image is acquired, it is then scaled to the photograph and superimposed over it. If the bones do not accurately fit the face at all anatomical points, a positive identification is ruled out. However, if all points between the facial bones and the photograph match, the positive identification is considered a good possibility.

When researchers superimposed the facial bones from the excavation over the only known photograph of Mitch Boyer, they obtained an excellent correlation. Therefore, there is a strong possibility that the remains of

the individual found between the two markers on Deep Ravine Trail are indeed those of Custer's lost scout.

With Boyer's identification and burial site reasonably established, battlefield detectives still had to nail things down even further by comparing the various eyewitness recollections to the physical evidence. After all, five of the observers obviously reported an inaccurate location for the scout's remains. The misidentification very likely was attributable to the crushed skull and the condition of the body. Or perhaps it was due to the Soldiers' trauma of burying their comrades after two exhausting days of combat (not to mention memories that dimmed over the years). On the other hand, Boyer was one of the few men with Custer who was not dressed in a military uniform; therefore, his remains should have stood out from those of the Soldiers.

However, the identification of Boyer at the site now known as Deep Ravine Trail (formerly "South Skirmish Line") closely corresponds with the remaining eyewitness account, that of Colonel John Gibbon. His testimony, combined with the archaeological evidence and the physical anthropological investigation of the bones, establishes that the remains found between markers 33 and 34, just below the crest of the ridge that forms the north side of the primary drainage area of Deep Ravine, are indeed those of Mitch Boyer. This, of course, means that the archaeological data flatly contradict some common interpretations of the historical accounts. Therefore, the other documentary records must surely be reassessed in light of the evidence presented by the battlefield detectives.

The Scout's Last Rest

Mitch Boyer's descendants, who today reside in southeast Montana, requested that his remains be buried alongside those of his comrades in Custer National Cemetery. So with full military honors, Custer's lost scout was finally laid to rest. Thanks to the efforts of battlefield detectives, a 130-year-old murder mystery has been solved and a new marble marker stands on the discovery site telling all, "Scout Mitch Boyer fell here June 25, 1876." ★

Douglas D. Scott, Ph.D., an internationally known battlefield archaeologist, is retired from the National Park Service. He currently is an adjunct professor at the University of Nebraska's Department of Anthropology and Geography and also is an adjunct professor with Nebraska Wesleyan University's Master's of Forensic Science program. His most recent book (written with Jerome A. Greene), "Finding Sand Creek: History, Archaeology and the 1864 Massacre Site," is the basis for an upcoming "Battlefield Detective" article.

More on Boyer and the Little Bighorn

The following articles and books are highly recommended for those interested in reading further accounts of the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Bateman, Robert L. "George Armstrong Custer: The Civil War's Boy General." *Armchair General* Jan. 2005: 42-47.

Morelock, Jerry D. "Custer at the Little Bighorn: The Saga of the 7th Cavalry." *Armchair General* Jan. 2005: 66-79.

Gray, Gary S. *Custer's Last Campaign: Mitch Boyer and the Little Bighorn Reconstructed*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991

Scott, Douglas D., Richard A. Fox, Melissa A. Connor, and Dick Harmon. *Archaeological Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Bighorn*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989

Scott, Douglas D., P. Willey, and Melissa A. Connor. *They Died With Custer: Soldiers' Bones From the Battle of the Little Bighorn*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999

BATTLEFIELD LEADER

With Israel's very existence threatened, one man stepped forward to help save his nation.

BY ABRAHAM RABINOVICH

On October 1, 1973, Israeli General Moshe “Moussa” Peled bade farewell to the armored division he commanded and prepared to spend the next year away from the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) studying economics at a civilian university. IDF Chief of Staff General David Elazar had suggested the sabbatical, telling Peled that he would have to leave at the end of that year unless a suitable position became available for him. Five days later, on the morning of Yom Kippur, circumstances beyond anyone’s control caused that “suitable position” dramatically to materialize. Peled received a call from his former deputy who had taken command of the armored division after he left. “You might want to get back here,” he said.

One hundred thousand Egyptian troops had just launched a surprise attack across the Suez Canal into the Israeli-occupied Sinai. Even worse, the Egyptian attack was coordinated with a Syrian assault on the strategic Golan Heights in the north. With Syrian tanks outnumbering the IDF’s on the Golan 8-to-1, they represented a dagger thrusting at the very heart of Israel. Peled immediately donned his uniform and prepared to lead his division in what would become a desperate fight to save his country.

FIGHTING FOR ISRAEL

The son of east European Jews who immigrated to Palestine before World War I, Moussa Peled had been fighting for Israel even before it became a country. When the U.N. Security Council resolution partitioning Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab one passed on November 29, 1947, the 21-year-old was already a veteran.

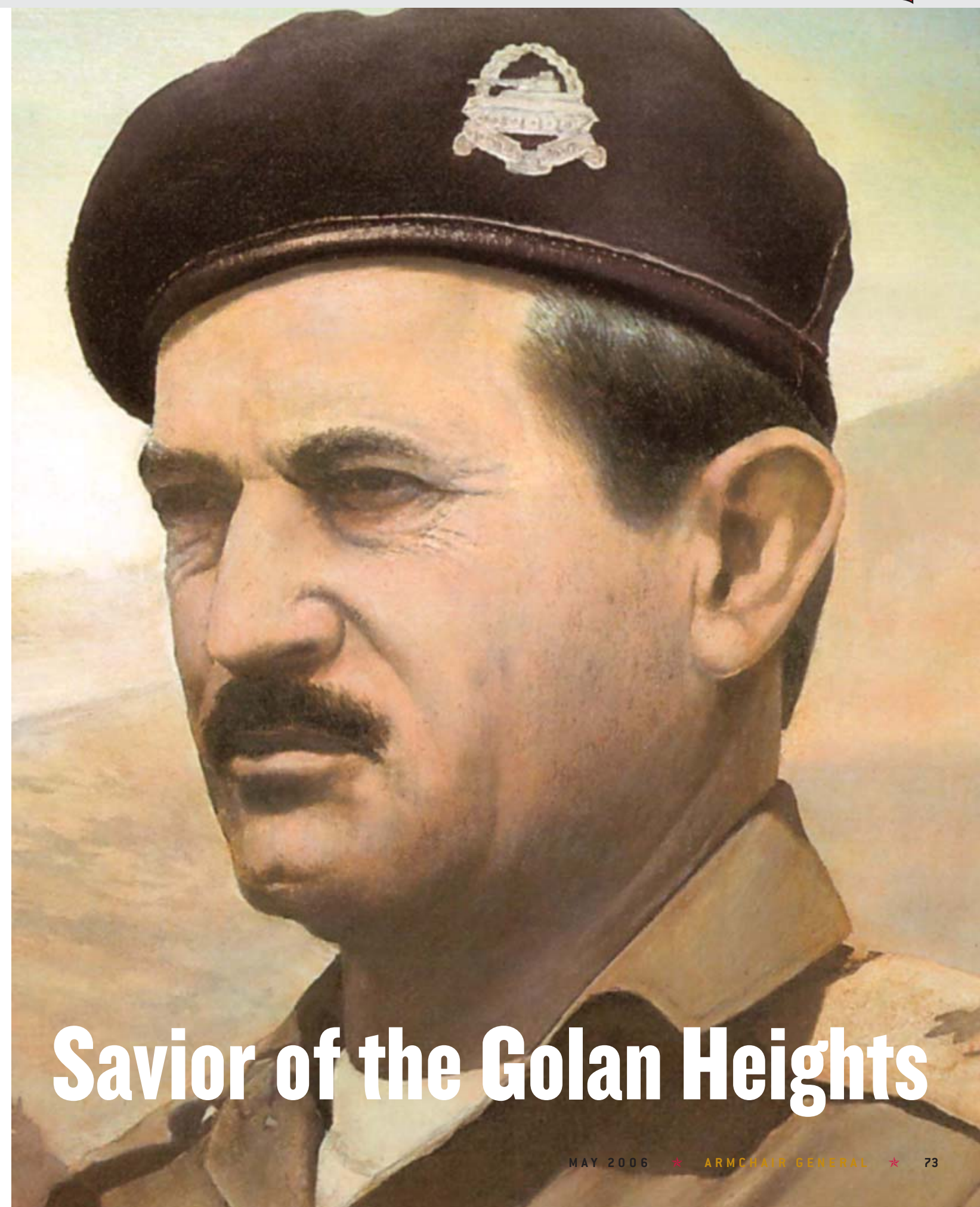
Since the age of 13, Peled had aided the Haganah – the Jewish underground militia – taking on activities ranging from hiding arms caches to serving as his village’s defense coordinator. During one year he even served as an assistant to his next-door neighbor, Moshe Dayan, an up-and-coming figure in the Haganah’s ranks and a future

Israeli chief of staff and defense minister. Dayan organized retaliatory raids against Arab villages harboring guerrillas who had attacked Jews. Since losing an eye in an earlier skirmish, Dayan preferred not to drive at night. Young Peled drove for him.

While still a teenager, Peled was chosen as platoon leader in his village home guard. He participated in numerous actions against Arab militants, most of which were aimed at keeping the vital roads open to Jewish traffic. He impressed his superiors, and at the beginning of 1948 he was selected to attend the first officers’ course organized by the Haganah. The instructors were veterans of service with the British army, so for the first time, Peled was exposed to formal tactical training and military discipline. He would soon put that training to good use.

Following the U.N. partition decision, the British began pulling out of the country and both Jews and Arabs busily prepared for their inevitable confrontation. The fighting occurred in two stages. Initially, the Jews and Palestinian Arabs continued their local skirmishing while British forces stood by, eager to complete their withdrawal. Then immediately following the final British pullout on May 14, 1948, the armies of the surrounding Arab states launched a massive invasion to crush the new state of Israel. Peled was in the thick of it.

General Moussa Peled



Savior of the Golan Heights

MAY 2006 ★ ARMCHAIR GENERAL ★ 73

BATTLEFIELD LEADER

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

During Israel's yearlong fight to win its independence on the battlefield, Peled's handling of his platoon – outfitted as a mobile attack force mounted on jeeps, each with two machine guns – was daring, unorthodox and often spectacularly successful. Typically outnumbered by his Arab foes, Peled avoided costly frontal attacks and instead maneuvered behind enemy positions or struck a vulnerable flank. He constantly pushed his company commander to allow his platoon to “strike hard and strike fast” in order to gain the initiative over the enemy's larger, slower forces. Such tactics sometimes seemed foolhardy to his superiors who urged a more conservative approach. Peled, however, was not dissuaded.

Once when Peled's company commander told him that a daring assault he had planned would require permission from battalion headquarters, Peled told him to go ahead and seek permission – meanwhile, he was attacking! Ignoring the commander's warning that he could be court-martialed, Peled led his jeeps in a deep flanking movement and took them to the rear of the Arab force. His machine guns opened fire from 300 yards, cutting down many of the attackers while the rest of the enemy fled from the unexpected assault. Rather than a court-martial, Peled received a note from his company commander

stating that he was leaving the company and that Peled would take over his command. A note from the battalion commander confirmed the 22-year-old Peled's appointment.

As the fighting intensified, Peled witnessed officers whom he had admired buckle under the stress. Other men, generally young like him, emerged to lead Israel's army-in-the-making on the battlefield.

GROWTH OF AN ARMORED COMMANDER

At the end of Israel's War of Independence, Peled returned home and resumed farming. However, he continued as a reserve officer with the newly formed armored corps. In 1959, he agreed to a request from the head of the corps, General Haim Bar-Lev, to sign on with the regular army. In 1962, Peled journeyed abroad for the first time, traveling to the United States to spend a year at the U.S. Army Armor School at Fort Knox, Kentucky. This period played a major role in shaping him as a professional armor officer.

During the Six-Day War – the June 5-10, 1967, “desert blitzkrieg” in which Israel stunningly defeated an Arab coalition of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq – Peled served as deputy commander of the division that captured the crucial northern part of the West Bank territory. Newly appointed IDF Chief of Staff General Bar-Lev asked Colonel



October 11, 1973. Israeli soldiers fire a 175 mm self-propelled field gun against Syrian forces from the Golan Heights.

BETTMANN CORBIS

The formidable Sharon was as strong-willed as Peled, and both men could quickly turn a merely prickly situation into a full-blown confrontation.

Peled to head a team that was to formulate the military “lessons learned” in the Six-Day War.

The team recommended that permanent divisions be formed rather than knitting brigades into divisional task forces in time of war. Another recommendation was to acquire or construct mobile bridging equipment capable of spanning the Suez Canal if war with Egypt were renewed.

Although Peled’s star was clearly rising, an appointment as deputy to General Ariel Sharon, head of the IDF training directorate, almost derailed his promising military career. The formidable Sharon was as strong-willed as Peled, and both men could quickly turn a merely prickly situation into a full-blown confrontation.

Strained relations between the two reached the breaking point when Sharon publicly rebuked Peled during a presentation to other officers. Summoned afterward to Sharon’s office, Peled entered without saluting. When Sharon called him to task for the deliberate breach of military etiquette, Peled fired back that Sharon’s behavior negated the general’s right to a salute. Sharon’s reaction was predictable and immediate, and Peled reconciled himself to losing his position and possibly his rank. General Bar-Lev intervened, however, posting Peled to a brigadier general’s position as deputy commander of the Sinai Division, the only armored division in the standing army.

YOM KIPPUR, 1973

Peled’s subsequent appointment as head of the IDF’s Command and Staff College was followed by command of a reserve armored division. It was then that Peled gave up division command to begin his yearlong sabbatical, only to receive the phone call that sent him back into service five days later to help Israel face its darkest hour.

Israel’s leaders woke that day into a nightmare. For more than a week they had watched a massive Egyptian buildup along the Suez Canal, but military intelligence had discounted it as a training exercise. Additionally, an enormous Syrian buildup was taking place opposite the Golan Heights. Intelligence also misread this development, declaring that there was no chance of Syria going to war without Egypt – and Egypt, analysts insisted, was definitely not going to war. Nonetheless, near midnight on Yom Kippur eve, Zvi Zamir, the head of Israel’s intelligence service (the Mossad) passed along information from a London agent stating that, despite previous assessments, Egypt and Syria would indeed launch a two-front attack against Israel within hours.

Prime Minister Golda Meir ordered the immediate mobilization of the reserves (constituting two-thirds of Israel’s fighting forces), but the Arab attacks would be well underway before significant numbers of reserve units could reach the fronts. Until then, the thin line of regular forces would have to bear the brunt of the assaults.

In the west along the Suez Canal, 100,000 Egyptian troops backed by 2,000 artillery pieces were opposed by a small force of 450 Israeli infantrymen and 50 artillery cannon manning the east bank’s Bar-Lev Line of fortifications. On the Golan Heights to the north, the Syrians held an overwhelming 8-to-1 advantage in tanks and a far greater superiority in infantry and artillery. At 2 p.m. on Yom Kippur (October 6, 1973), the Arab armies opened their attack with air strikes and massive artillery bombardments.

Peled’s armored division differed from other Israeli reserve divisions in that it constituted the IDF general staff reserve. Rather than



DOUBLE DANGER. The Egyptian and Syrian surprise attacks on Yom Kippur, 1973, represented the greatest threat to Israel’s survival since its War of Independence. Particularly dangerous was the Syrian assault on the Golan Heights where Gen. Peled’s counterattack was delivered.

being pre-assigned to a specific front, Peled’s command was not to be committed until it became clear how the battle was developing. Although it had been assumed that Peled’s division would be deployed against the more formidable foe, Egypt (indeed, one of its brigades was immediately detached and ordered to the Suez Front), when Peled met with General Elazar in the IDF underground war room in Tel Aviv, the chief of staff told him to take the rest of his division north to the Golan. The Syrians had broken through in strength and General Yitzhak Hofi of Northern Command was not sure he could hold them.

Peled telephoned his deputy division commander and told him to start moving the division north immediately. Instead of returning to his division, however, Peled collected staff officers in two jeeps and drove directly to the Northern Command war room in the Galilee Hills. His advanced party found the headquarters in confusion. No one there could offer a coherent picture of what was happening at the front.

Peled found General Hofi lying exhausted on a cot in a dimly lit side room. He had been without sleep for two long days and nights. “My division arrives tonight,” said Peled to the general. “Where do you want us?”

To his astonishment, Hofi told him to form a defensive line along the Jordan River. Peled took the order to mean that Hofi expected to be forced off the Golan at any moment. Three Syrian divisions were



At dawn on day two of the Yom Kippur War, an Israeli armored brigade makes its way to the Golan Heights to relieve forces under Syrian attack.

By attacking on a narrow front, Peled believed the division would constitute a clenched fist powerful enough to smash through anything the Syrians managed to put in its way.

BATTLEFIELD LEADER

pushing forward all along the line with two more in reserve behind them – approximately 1,400 tanks. The understrength Israeli brigade defending the southern half of the Golan with a mere 77 tanks had been smashed, and the brigade defending the northern half with only 100 tanks was under intense pressure. Israeli warplanes, expected to take up the slack in such emergencies, were being swept from the sky by Soviet-made surface-to-air missiles. Small Israeli reserve tank units had begun to reach the front but promptly had to fight for their lives in fierce battles. Engineers were already preparing the Jordan bridges for demolition.

Peled countered Hofi's plan by telling him that his division should attack rather than defend. Too exhausted to argue the point, Hofi told Peled he could air his views at that evening's commanders' conference.

With a few hours remaining before the conference, Peled drove toward the Golan to see the situation for himself. At a bend in the road, he was startled to see a familiar figure sitting on a boulder watching the smoke rise over the Golan. It was Moshe Dayan. The defense minister, who had until that point been a national symbol of audacity and coolness under adversity, looked as if his world had collapsed. The surprise attack had shaken his self-confidence and made him fear for Israel's very survival. When Peled told Dayan of Hofi's order to defend and his own desire to attack, Dayan unhesitatingly told him to dig in and defend along the Jordan. Peled was shocked. He placed a reassuring hand on Dayan's shoulder and then left to continue his reconnaissance. He would not allow the doom-laden atmosphere to sap his fighting spirit. In the War of Independence, he had seen strong men become despondent and falter; yet in the end, they achieved victory.

Peled got close enough to the front that he could actually make out the low profiles of Syrian T-55 tanks in the distance. After surveying the scene, he and his staff officers began planning the deployment of their division for a counterattack. It was dark by the time they returned to Northern Command headquarters.

Peled was surprised to see Haim Bar-Lev at the headquarters. The former chief of staff was now a civilian employed as minister of commerce in

Golda Meir's government. General Elazar had asked him to report to him informally on the situation at Northern Command. Having already spoken with Hofi, Bar-Lev wanted to know Peled's thoughts. It would be a terrible mistake, Peled said, to have his armored division form a defensive line. Instead, he explained, it should launch a counterattack as soon as his tanks reached the battlefield. Bar-Lev called Elazar to relay Peled's proposal and to add his own endorsement. The chief of staff asked to speak to Peled himself. Once more, Peled laid out his plan for offensive action. Elazar approved the counterattack.



Gen. Moshe "Moussa" Peled, head of the Israeli Armored Corps, gives a speech during a military parade in 1976.

Peled on War

Israeli General Moshe Peled's command philosophy and aggressive style of leadership come through clearly in his own words. They evoke those of another famous armored force commander – George S. Patton Jr.

Asked once what made a good commander, Peled responded, "The ability to make decisions, regardless of the amount of information you have."

During Israel's War of Independence, platoon leader Peled was told by his company commander that the daring assault he had planned would require permission from higher headquarters. "You get permission," said Peled. "Meanwhile, I'm attacking."

When queried about why he never asked his men for volunteers for the dangerous missions undertaken by his unit, Peled explained, "If you want to choose an elite force, you pick men who have an option of joining or not; but once a war starts, there should be no questions. You lead your men, and that's it."

In 1973, with Israeli forces hard-pressed on the Golan Front, Peled was advised that his only viable option was to establish a defensive line and try to stop the Syrian assault. He snapped back, "I don't believe in defense; I believe we have to attack."

SAVING THE GOLAN – AND ISRAEL

At midnight on October 7, a day and a half after the war's outbreak, Peled briefed his officers on the grim situation they faced for the next day's counterattack. With no fuel trucks awaiting the division when it arrived, the tanks had been forced to fill up at a nearby gas station – the officers paid the proprietor with IOUs. Radio antennas had been shot away, so there were no intercepts of Syrian radio signals from which the Israelis could glean tactical information. Moreover, Israeli lookout posts had all been overrun and captured. Nonetheless, the counterattack would proceed based upon the general information they already possessed – that three Syrian front-line divisions were clearly moving west toward the edge of the heights overlooking Israel, and that two Syrian armored divisions in reserve likely had not yet entered the Golan. Scant information, but enough for Peled to devise a plan of attack.

Peled's division would strike from the south, hoping to hit the rear of the Syrian main force. By attacking on a narrow front, Peled believed the division would constitute a clenched fist powerful enough to smash through anything the Syrians managed to put in its way. Driving north, it would block the openings in the hills through which the Syrians had broken into the Golan. The Syrians would have to fight or pull back. If they fought, Peled was confident his men could outshoot them, regardless of the odds. His division would have the element of surprise on its side and would be striking the enemy's rear or exposed flank. Telling his officers that they would move out be-

For three hours, the two sides fought a swirling battle at close range until finally the Syrians broke off and limped from the battlefield. Peled's "clenched fist" had prevailed.

fore dawn, Peled then advised them to try to get some sleep.

By midmorning, the division's lead formation came upon a scattering of Israeli Centurion and Sherman tanks (the Shermans were Israeli-improved versions of the World War II veterans) attempting to suppress a brigade of T-55s pushing south. Peled's tanks took over the fight and began pushing the Syrians back. Alarmed at the sudden appearance of a strong Israeli force on their southern flank, the Syrians hurriedly deployed tank-hunting infantry formations wielding Sagger wire-guided anti-tank missiles and rocket propelled grenades – weapons that had already proved highly effective in the Sinai where almost two-thirds of the IDF Sinai Division's 300 tanks were knocked out within the first 12 hours of the war.

To deal with this threat, Peled called for a rolling barrage of artillery to be laid down just ahead of his advance. Unlike the Sinai, where the sands muffled the artillery explosions, the basalt boulders of the Golan Heights multiplied the artillery's damage by spewing deadly splinters when struck. The barrage achieved the desired effect.

Northern Command had attached two reserve brigades to Peled's division. He deployed these on his flanks, pushing them forward in a grinding battle. As darkness fell, both sides halted to catch their breath and to refuel and repair damaged tanks. Peled's division was now almost abreast of the main Syrian entry point into the southern Golan. It was clear that the next day's battle would be decisive.

Shortly after the division resumed its northward push, Peled noticed a large cloud of dust traveling in his direction from the Syrian territory to the east. Having realized that Peled's forces presented a threat, the Syrians were sending in reserves to prevent him from cutting their main supply line. Another dust cloud to the northwest told Peled that the Syrians were also pulling back front-line units to deal with the threat his units posed. For three hours, the two sides fought a swirling battle at close range until finally the Syrians broke off and limped from the battlefield, abandoning over 50 destroyed tanks. Peled's "clenched fist" had prevailed.

Peled's unexpected armored thrust from the south, coupled with aggressive attacks by Israeli reserve brigades in central Golan and an epic stand by the Israeli tank brigade at the northern end of the line, had turned the battle around. Only four days after the surprise attack had almost swamped the Israeli defenses, the Syrian army departed the Golan, leaving behind 800 tanks. As the Israelis pushed toward Damascus, two Iraqi divisions and two Jordanian brigades reinforced the Syrians. After fierce fighting, the battle in the north tapered off and the focus of the war shifted west to the Egyptian Front.

The Yom Kippur War ended on October 24 when the U.N. – prompted by two very worried superpowers, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. – brokered a ceasefire. Peled's division was transferred to the Sinai Front in case hostilities resumed there.

A LIFETIME OF SERVICE

Moussa Peled's military career took a major upturn after the war. He was appointed head of the Israeli Armored Corps, and over the next five years he rebuilt the fighting arm that had withstood the



An Israeli tank — an up-gunned U.S. M-4 Sherman — maneuvers on the Golan Plateau during the Yom Kippur War.

worst of the war and paid such a grievous price. He recruited promising reserve officers to sign on with the regular army to help rebuild the corps, and succeeded in doubling its size. The war uncovered major shortcomings in armored battle doctrine, particularly the notion that armor could go it alone with minimal infantry and artillery support. Peled therefore revised the doctrine. Rebuilding the armored corps after the Yom Kippur War was one of the major achievements of his career.

After his retirement Peled helped create the Armored Corps Museum at Latrun, which serves as both a memorial site and an educational tool. Although the project initially encountered widespread skepticism, by the time Peled succumbed to cancer at the age of 74 in 2000, Latrun had become one of the most impressive armor museums in the world. Once again, Moussa Peled had done what he set out to do – and he did it his way. ★

Abraham Rabinovich, a former reporter for "Newsday" and "The Jerusalem Post," was born in New York and now lives in Jerusalem where he is a freelance journalist and author. His most recent book, "The Yom Kippur War," is the most comprehensive account of that conflict.

WALK WHERE THEY FOUGHT

STORMING HITLER'S LAIR Berlin, 1945

March with the Red Army as it captures World War II's greatest prize – the Nazi capital.

BY RICHARD ARMSTRONG

Joseph Stalin puffed his pipe and studied the operations map spread across the conference table in his cavernous Kremlin office. Marshals Georgi Zhukov and Ivan Konev had just presented their respective plans for the final operation against Nazi Germany. Zhukov was confident that his 1st Belorussian Front could capture Berlin by itself. Konev, however, argued that Zhukov's plan to send the 1st Ukrainian Front well south of the German capital missed an opportunity for a coordinated frontal assault on the city. Tension filled the air. But then meetings with Stalin were always tense, particularly since he purged the cream of the Red Army's military leadership in 1937.

As far as Stalin was concerned, Zhukov was becoming a little too popular with the Soviet people – they had even begun calling him “Marshal Victory.” He would take care of that potential problem later, but right now he needed the ex-czarist cavalry sergeant for one more ruthless drive to end the war. Stalin, who had a well-developed talent for exploiting human weaknesses, knew just what to do to ensure victory: He would pit Zhukov against Konev by making the war's final push a race to capture the Nazi capital.

Staring pensively at the demarcation line between the two fronts (army groups) on the map, Stalin picked up a pencil and crossed

out the portion of the boundary that prevented Konev's troops from striking for Berlin. Stepping back from the table he declared, “Whoever gets there *first* will take Berlin.”

The Battle

Germany's last-gasp defense of the Third Reich's heartland ran along a ragged north-south line west of the Oder River, between Germany and Poland. In mid-March 1945, an increasingly paranoid Hitler – he had always distrusted his military leaders, but es-

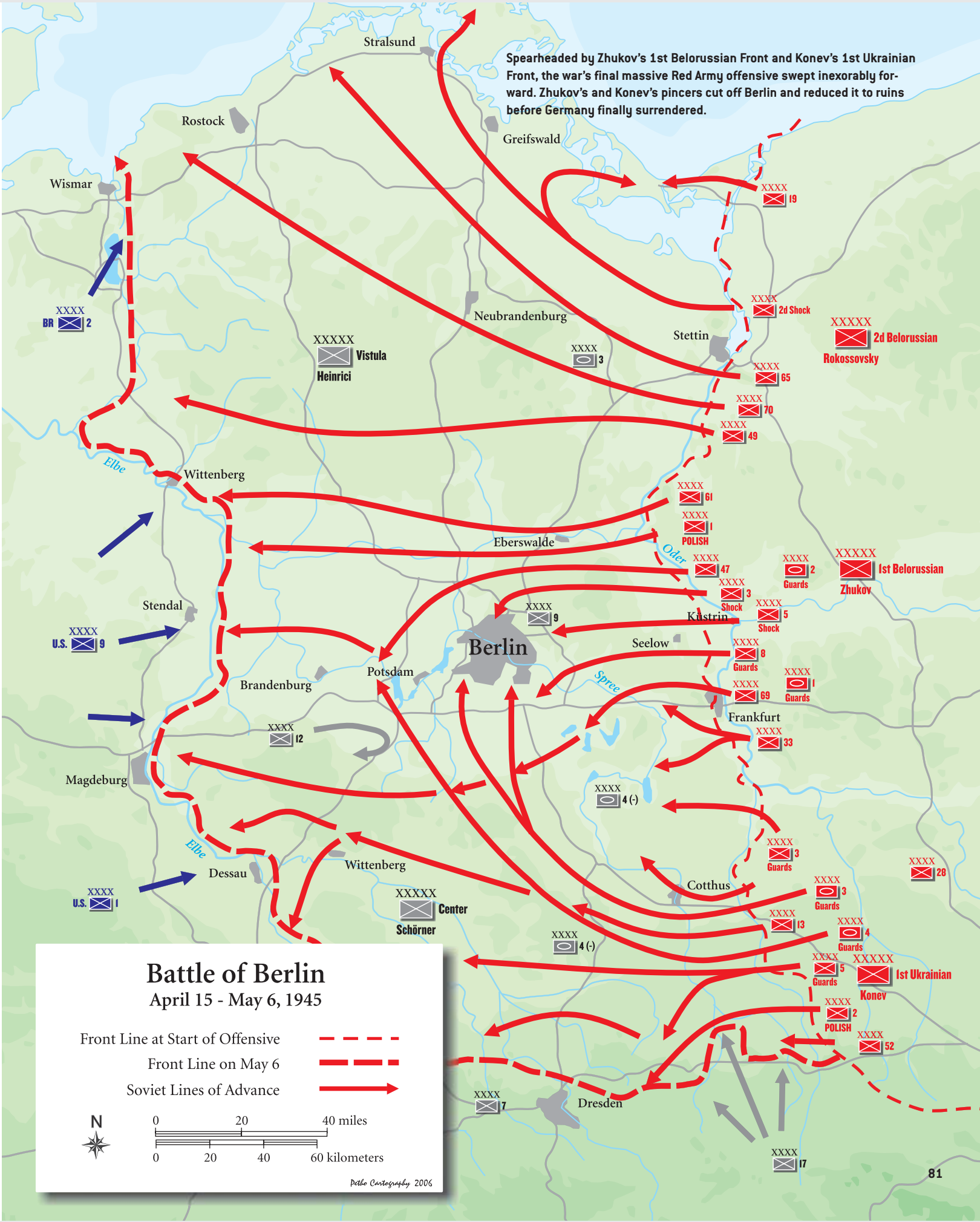
pecially after some of them tried to murder him in July 1944 – ordered General Gotthard Heinrici to replace SS leader Heinrich Himmler in command of the Berlin defense.

Heinrici was a tough, gnarled officer whose threadbare uniform disguised a brilliant tactician. Having commanded Eastern Front units since 1941, he was a crafty fighter who invariably predicted to the hour the launch of Red Army offensives. Heinrici had effectively held defensive sectors against overwhelming odds in the past, and now Hitler counted on him to defend Berlin as successfully as their enemy Zhukov had defended Moscow in 1941.

To the Soviet leaders, it seemed as if the war was as good as won. Nonetheless, Stalin was in a hurry and therefore they mounted their final push in an unusually urgent atmosphere. Perhaps projecting his paranoid personality on Allied Supreme Commander General Dwight Eisenhower, Stalin believed that the Anglo-American command was preparing a secret operation to seize Berlin under the guise of helping the Red Army. Determined to reach Berlin before the Western Allies – regardless of the cost in Red Army lives – the Soviet high command massed three fronts. The commanders were ordered to take Berlin and reach the Elbe River within 12 to 15 days. In addition to the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian Fronts, the 2d Belorussian Front, under the command of Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky, would se-



Under Allied attack from the east, west and south, Hitler's remaining forces were stretched perilously thin by the time the Red Army launched its final offensive to capture Berlin.



WALK WHERE THEY FOUGHT

cure northern Germany across the lower Oder River. The Red Army general staff calculated that their 2.5 million troops, 6,250 tanks and 42,000 artillery pieces and mortars achieved force ratios of 2.5:1 to as much as 4:1 over their German opponent.

While Stalin plotted in the Kremlin, Heinrici inspected his defenses along the Oder. He closely read intelligence reports to determine when the Red Army would attack and concluded that the Russian “steamroller” would not set out before mid-April – even though the enemy had made several feints in an attempt to throw him off course. On the evening of Sunday, April 15, Heinrici saw unmistakable indicators that the offensive was about to begin and therefore ordered General Theodor Busse, 9th Army commander, to “move back and take up positions on the second line of defense.”

At 4 a.m. the next morning, Zhukov stood in his observation bunker and

boomed, “Now, comrades, now!” Nearly 10,000 artillery guns responded with an ear-splitting, half-hour barrage while 140 searchlights blinded the German defenders. However, Heinrici’s timely order for his men to abandon the first-line German positions during the night left the Red Army artillery pounding only empty positions and the Russian infantry with no one to shoot.

By sunrise, Zhukov realized that his first echelon assault had struck nothing but air. Seething, he committed his tank armies early. As the tankers moved through the infantry, a monstrous traffic jam resulted at the constrained bridgehead between the Oder River and the dominant heights directly to the west, near Seelow. When the tanks attempted to advance across the marshy bottomland on roads bordered by water-filled canals, they became vulnerable to fire from the Germans’ new defensive positions. However, heavy losses in tanks and

infantry were not as important to Zhukov as losing valuable time. In characteristically harsh and sarcastic language, Stalin reprimanded the commander.

Unlike his counterpart to the north, Konev saturated enemy positions with artillery for over two and a half hours. His 1st Ukrainian Front penetrated a relatively weak German defensive line and fended off counterattacking reserves. Noting Konev’s excellent progress, Stalin instructed him to turn his tank armies toward Berlin.

Once Zhukov’s armies finally broke through the German resistance at the Seelow Heights, they still encountered tough opposition from the reinforcing panzer units, which slowed the offensive’s progress. The Germans fought desperately; they understood well what a Red Army breakthrough

would mean for them. Determined not to allow his forces to be trapped on the Oder, Heinrici ordered the 3d Panzer Army along with part of the 9th Army to withdraw to the west. This move created a fatal breach in the rapidly deteriorating German defense guarding the approaches to Berlin. Zhukov’s armies at last began to rout the German defenders.

Meanwhile Rokossovsky’s 2d Belorussian Front, whose offensive began on April 20, encountered stiff resistance crossing the Oder. After six days of bitter fighting, the front finally pushed westward, forcing General Hasso von Manteuffel’s 3d Panzer Army to retreat. Rokossovsky later observed, “We began a rapid pursuit of fleeing units, which, however, lost no opportunity to snap back.”

Konev’s armored groups reached Berlin’s outer defenses on the evening of April 20. The following day, units of the 1st Belorussian Front also broke into Berlin’s suburbs. By April 22, Zhukov’s 8th Guards Army and Konev’s 3d Guards Tank Army were converging with Berlin trapped between them.

On April 23, Stalin divided Berlin in such a way that left the much-coveted prize of the Reichstag to Zhukov’s forces, which meant his men would get the honor of placing the Soviet flag on the ruined symbol of Nazi rule. Konev was crushed. Although the demarcation line placed his forces only 150 yards west of the Reichstag, they might as well have been on the moon. His 3d Guards Tank Army had pushed an entire corps beyond the demarcation line, but the dejected Konev ordered it pulled back.

Two days later, on April 25, Zhukov moved the 47th Army and the 2d Guards Tank Army around Berlin where they linked up with Konev’s 4th Guards Tank Army west of the city, sealing it off from any German – or potential American – interference. In the meantime, Konev sent his infantry to meet the Allies at the Elbe River. Stalin was clearly concerned that the Americans and the British would enter Berlin before his forces. After the war Zhukov stated, “Our first task was to cut off the Allies from Berlin, and then take the city.”

With the linkup of the two Soviet fronts, Heinrici’s Army Group Vistula and other German forces were isolated from the Berlin defenders. While he would not admit to the German high command that he was retreat-



TOP: The Brandenburg Gate as it looked in 1945 following the fall of Berlin.

BOTTOM: July 13, 1945. While standing at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, Russian Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky, British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, and Russian Marshal Georgi Zhukov celebrate the Allied victory over Nazi Germany.

Zhukov stood in his observation bunker and boomed, “Now, comrades, now!” Nearly 10,000 artillery guns responded with an earsplitting, half-hour barrage.

ing, he continued to withdraw his southern flank. Expressing concern for his troops, Heinrici declared, “I refuse to carry out these suicidal orders any longer.”

Berlin’s many canals, underground byways and rubble masonry favored the defense. Nonetheless, due to lack of resources, the defenses of “Fortress Berlin” were rudimentary and makeshift. Some German defenders fought hard, believing that they were buying time until the British and Americans arrived. Others thought that the Russians could not possibly take Berlin. After all, Hitler still remained in the Reichschancellery – or so they thought. His precise location was actually below the building, tucked safely inside the reinforced concrete cocoon of his bombproof bunker.

The German situation map in the Führerbunker showed a defense zone with nine sectors; however, it existed only on paper. With supplies depleted, the Germans had no time to set up an organized defense. Rather, old men in the Home Guard and young boys of the Hitler Youth were thrown together with remnants of tactical units. All the while, Russian tanks rolled closer by the hour.

The Red Army pounded Berlin with 1.8 million artillery shells. Soviet tanks initially led attacks in the streets but soon suffered heavy casualties on the bombed-out, confining urban battlefield. Even in the hands of boys, panzerfausts were lethal to the tanks. The Red Army quickly changed tactics and began using tanks in small numbers with infantry positioned to protect their flanks and blind spots.

Stalin challenged the Soviet troops to hoist a “banner of victory” over the Reichstag by May Day. At noon on April 28, Red Army infantrymen of the 79th Rifle Corps, 3d Shock Army advanced on the Spree River near the Moltke Bridge. They found the bridge mined and barricaded on both ends. Soviet engineers defused all but one of the charges, which detonated although the bridge did not collapse. By early morning of April 30, the Russians seized the bridge and their lead troops began fighting house to house in the Diplomatic Quarter.

In addition to obstacles such as a water-filled anti-tank ditch that cut across the Königplatz, the volunteers assaulting the Reichstag were confronted by numerous gun pits, artillery emplacements and trenches

connected to the building itself. The regimental commander, Colonel Zinchenko, took charge of a red banner expressly set aside for the Reichstag’s dome. As the volunteers battled their way into the building, Privates Pyatnitski, Yakomovich, Prygunov and Tscherbina entered first. Pyatnitski was killed almost immediately, but other volunteers soon followed. After half a day of viciously battling for every room and corridor, the men finally reached their objective. Four Red Army soldiers made their way onto the domed roof and planted the flag at 10:40 p.m. on April 30. The fighting, however, continued for the next two days.

Cameraman Yevgeny Kaldei’s famous photograph of the soldiers hoisting the flag atop the Reichstag was actually staged later during daylight hours using a flag that Kaldei himself had made. Before the photograph was shown publicly, Stalin had the photographer doctor it slightly to remove the telltale row of “liberated” German wristwatches clearly visible on the outstretched arm of the officer passing up the flag.

Perhaps anticipating the fate that it has recently been revealed Churchill had planned for him – execution – Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945. At 1 p.m. on May 2, the surviving Germans crawled out of the ruins of the Reichstag and surrendered. The Battle of Berlin was over.

The Tour

The end of the Cold War and the easing of travel restrictions in former East Germany have made it possible for our readers to visit the key areas of this important conflict. While Berlin has been rebuilt from the rubble, the approaches to the city remain relatively similar to what they were in 1945 – except perhaps for a small amount of

urban sprawl and much improved roads.

Base of Operations: Berlin is the perfect base of operations, offering modern accommodations and easy access to tour points as well as a wealth of other historical sights within the city and surrounding area.

Our tour of the Battle of Berlin operational area is designed for two days. (See maps on page 87.) Day one is an extended field trip along the two major Red Army avenues of approach, giving the visitor a sense of the terrain between Berlin and the Oder River and an opportunity to view the last decisive battle area of the war against Germany. Day two is a tour through some of the key battle locations inside Berlin itself.

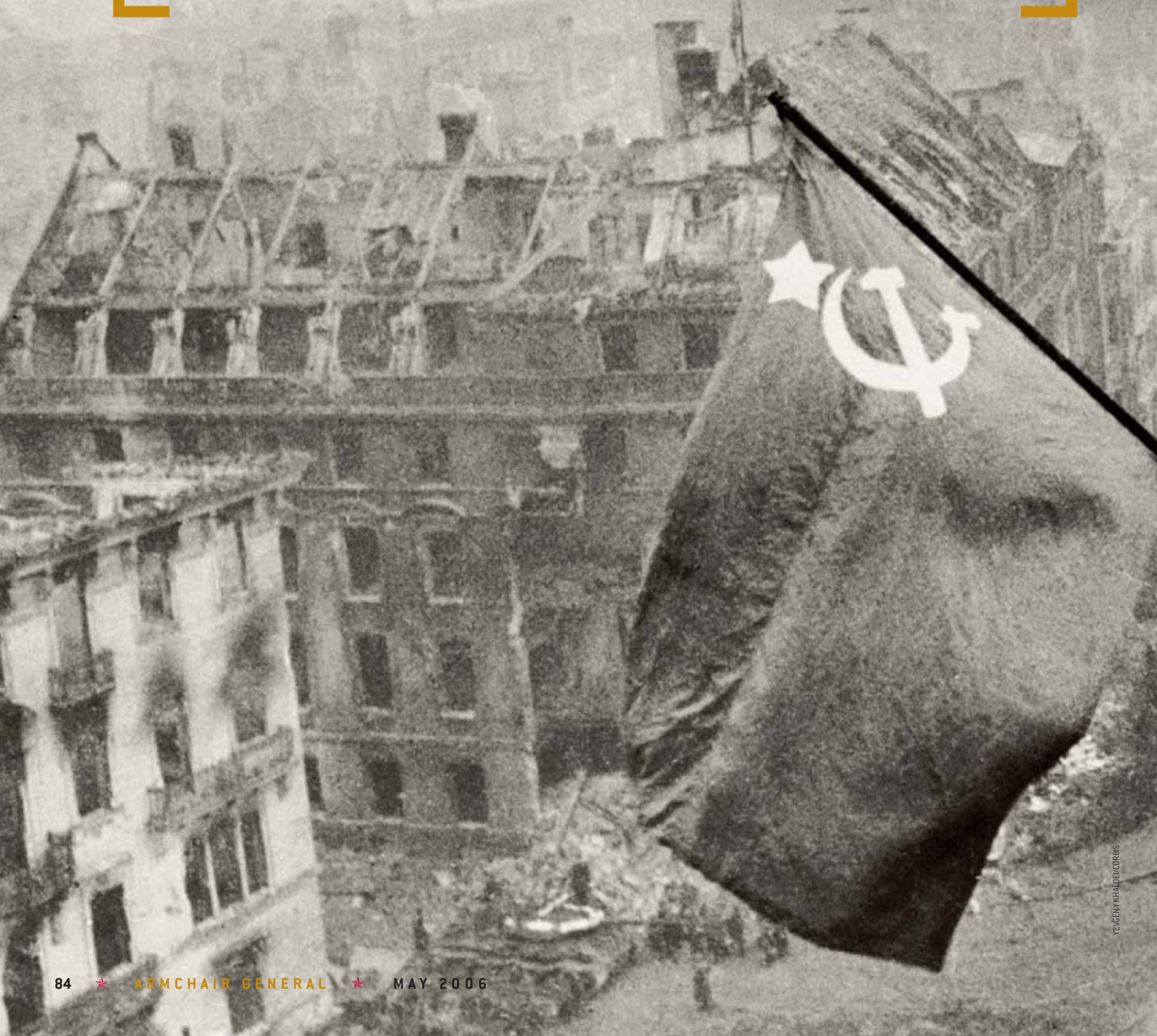
DAY ONE

Tour Point 1 – Münchenburg: As you begin your trip to the Oder River, try to imagine the dramatic scene of nearly total devastation in this area in 1945. Head east on High-



Russian artillery pieces shell German positions during the drive to Berlin.

Four Red Army soldiers made their way onto the domed roof and planted the flag at 10:40 p.m. on April 30. The fighting, however, continued for the next two days.



May 2, 1945. A Red Army soldier raises the Soviet flag over the Reichstag as the Russians take Berlin and bring about the fall of Nazi Germany.



WALK WHERE THEY FOUGHT

way 1 (formerly Reich Strasse 1) through sterile, communist-era architecture. Within an hour you will arrive in the town of Münchenburg, which was a major assembly area for German units propping up the main line of defense against Zhukov. Continuing east, you will pass Jahnsfelde where on April 18, 1945, the Münchenburg Panzer Division counterattack slowed but failed to stop the advance of Zhukov's 1st Belorussian Front.

Tour Point 2 – Seelow Heights: Farther east along Highway 1 is the town of Seelow, which was on the Red Army's main axis of attack. On its western side, a row of small signs marks the graves of about 50 German soldiers from the 76th Panzer Grenadier Division. The panoramic view on Seelow's eastern limits makes it immediately apparent why this area was so important to the German defense. The town lies at the top of an escarpment known as the Seelow Heights. From this vantage point, the Germans easily observed the Red Army forces assembling in the Küstrin bridgehead some five miles to the east. The vertical drop of the heights is accentuated by the broad, flat, marshy floodplain of the Oder River.

Just beyond the eastern town limits stands a Soviet war memorial. A bronze Red Army guardsman looms over a sculpted turret of an early Nazi panzer tank. The guardsman represents his 7.5 million comrades killed in the war. The Seelow Heights Museum is located next to the memorial. On display are Red Army T-34 tanks, a "Katyusha" multiple-rocket launcher, and one of the searchlights used in Zhukov's predawn attack. The museum also offers a video presentation of the Battle of Seelow. If your German isn't up to the task, ask the curator for the English version.

A drive along the heights on Highway 167 to the south would reveal evidence of hard fighting everywhere in the pockmarked buildings.

Tour Point 3 – Küstrin Bridgehead Area: Continue east on Highway 1 down the escarpment to where the initial Küstrin bridgehead was captured by Zhukov's troops. The countryside reveals no obvious signs of the battle despite the fact that hundreds of tanks and armored vehicles were destroyed here. However, farmers and excava-

tion crews continue to dig up equipment and, occasionally, human remains. While on the floodplain, locate the dominating Reitwein Spur on the eastern horizon. Prior to their seizure of the Seelow Heights, this was the only piece of high ground held by the Russians.

Tour Point 4 – Reitwein: Retrace Highway 1 and turn south on Highway 112. Travel a little over four kilometers and turn east on the connecting road to Reitwein, which lies at the foot of the north end of the Reitwein Spur. Indentations from artillery and small-arms fire cover the walls of the village's roofless church. Also, Reitwein's large cemetery contains a stone Soviet war memorial.

A crude sign written in German, which reads, "Shukov – Befehlsstand 1945" (Zhukov's Command post 1945), points to a path that leads to the top of the spur where General Vassily Chuikov's 8th Guards Army command bunker was located. The twin entrances to this hero of Stalingrad's bunker have been blocked, but the area offers excellent visibility of the bridgehead and the distant Seelow Heights. Leaving the path and moving to the highest point, you will find a series of trenches that served as an observation post. Although trees now cover the spur, it is still possible to imagine Zhukov's view of the Seelow Heights battle. This was his starting position for the 50-mile push west to Berlin.

Tour Point 5 – Sachendorf-Dolgelin: Return to Highway 112 and follow the small road west from Rathstock through Sachendorf to the Seelow Heights near Dolgelin. A large drainage canal beside the road – one of many in the area – prevented Russian tanks from deploying and turned the road into a death-trap.

Tour Point 6 – Lubben: Drive south from Dolgelin on Highway 167 to Highway 112 toward Frankfurt on the Oder. The Soviet operation bypassed Frankfurt. From Frankfurt take Highway 87 through Mullrose and Beeskow to Lubben. As you travel southwest, note the thick forests and numerous water obstacles. These impediments reveal why the location was not a Red Army main sector. Konev's commanders were worried about the burning woods ahead of them as they

raced through the area, and flanking Red Army forces trapped German units such as the 4th Panzer Army here.

Tour Point 7 – Zossen-Wunsdorf: From Lubben take Highway 115 to Baruth. Konev's 3d Guards Tank Army (GTA) used this approach to Berlin. At Baruth take Highway 96 north to Wunsdorf. By April 20, the 3d GTA had overrun the villages of Zossen and Wunsdorf, which are today linked by a north-south road. The German Armed Forces High Command – the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (OKW) and Oberkommando des Heeres (OKH) – was enclosed in a huge bunker and communications complex in this area.

Tour Point 8 – Teltow Canal: Return to Highway 96 and travel north. Turn west at Mahlow and follow the road signs to Teltow. The Germans prepared strong defenses on the northern side of the Teltow canal and destroyed a number of its bridges. Using heavy artillery against the buildings on that side, the 3d GTA crossed the canal on April 24 and quickly advanced to become the first Red Army troops to enter Berlin.

This grand circuit of the 1945 Berlin campaign operational area brings you back to your base in the city, completing day one of the tour.

DAY TWO

Tour Point 9 – Moltke Bridge: The assault on the Reichstag was truly a battle within a battle. Therefore, we begin day two of the tour in the heart of the city at the Moltke Bridge over the Spree River. At midnight on April 28, Zhukov's 79th Rifle Corps, 3d Shock Army attacked across the bridge while being supported by artillery. By 2 a.m., the lead battalion had secured a bridgehead on the far bank in the western segment of Berlin's Diplomatic Quarter. (The Swiss Legation building is all that remains today of the Diplomatic Quarter.) With supplies and ammunition brought forward over the newly won bridge, Red Army infantrymen fought room by room through the Ministry of Interior building. After securing it, and with no time for rest or rearmament, they received orders to attack the Reichstag.

Tour Point 10 – Reichstag: Isolated by the

The Reichstag was the premier prize of the Battle of Berlin, and Red Army commanders vied for the privilege of assaulting it.

meandering Spree River, the Reichstag, which was the seat of the German parliament, is one of Berlin's most historical landmarks. When crossing the park area that was once the Königplatz, you are literally walking the battlefield. The Reichstag was the premier prize of the Battle of Berlin, and Red Army commanders vied for the privilege of assaulting it. Under pressure to capture the building by May Day, the Soviets heavily damaged the structure with tank and artillery fire during the assault. After its reconstruction in 1999, the Reichstag became the seat of the Bundestag of reunited Germany.

Tour Point 11 – Brandenburg Gate and Soviet Memorial: Some 2,200 Red Army soldiers fell in the final battle for the Reichstag. A short walk south of the Reichstag brings you to a Soviet war memorial commemorating these deaths. Also marking the sacrifice is the Russians' first war cemetery, located in the shadow of the Brandenburg Gate. Situated at the end of the famous boulevard Unter den Linden, the 60-meter-tall gate was part of a wall that formerly surrounded the main entrance to Berlin.

Tour Point 12 – Reichschancellery: To reach the final stop on your tour of the Battle of Berlin, leave Brandenburg Gate and walk south several hundred yards on Ebertstrasse to the wooded area where the Reichschancellery was once located. This building was the second main objective in Berlin and was where Stalin had hoped his troops would surprise and capture his nemesis, Adolf Hitler. However, the 8th Guards Army did not reach the Reichschancellery until May 2, two days after Hitler had killed himself. The search for his remains began immediately and fueled half a century of controversy. (See *History's Mysteries: Where's Adolf?* in the May 2005 issue of *Armchair General*.) Occupying Soviets tore down the Chancellery and used its red marble in Soviet war memorials on Strasse des 17 Juni and in Treptow Park. The ceiling of the Führerbunker, situated behind the Chancellery, was destroyed in 1988 and the entire complex was filled in. ★

Richard Armstrong has written numerous military affairs articles for historical and professional journals and is the author of "Red Army Tank Commanders" and "Red Army Legacies."



Day 1 Tour: Although the street fighting in Berlin generated riveting headlines and provided compelling photographs, the Soviet campaign had already isolated Hitler's last stronghold before the city was taken in the block-by-block assault.



Day 2 Tour: The Soviet capture of Hitler's capital reduced most of the city to rubble as Russian units vied with one another to be the first to seize the Reichstag, acknowledged as the "crown jewel" objective.

WITNESS TO WAR



Belgian authorities memorialized the massacre site in 1945 with this granite monument.

MASSACRE AT Baugnez Crossroads

How young artilleryman Eugene Garrett survived the Battle of the Bulge's most infamous incident.

When Supreme Allied Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower learned of the German assault in the Ardennes on December 16, 1944, he instantly recognized it as a major offensive and not the "spoiling attack" his subordinate, 12th Army Group Commander General Omar N. Bradley, assured him it was. Ike reacted immediately and decisively, ordering the 7th Armored Division from General William H. Simpson's Ninth Army to proceed at once to the threatened sector. One of the convoys streaming toward "the Bulge" contained the 7th's divisional artillery units. A serial of that convoy was composed of Battery B, 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion, a Sound and Flash unit whose mission was to locate enemy artillery firing positions.

Private Eugene Garrett, a teenager from Drumright, Oklahoma, was a member of the 285th. Recalling the events of that day, he said, "We had been school troops at the Artillery School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, before being sent overseas, and we were very good at our job. ... We had been traveling all day over icy roads from our base in Holland and it was stop-and-go all the way. ... Shortly after we passed through Malmedy [Belgium], the convoy stopped once again. It seemed so routine that I didn't even bother to take my weapon with me when we all jumped out of the truck."

Garrett and his comrades quickly discovered that the stop was anything but routine when they were rudely met by Waffen SS troops from Jochen Peiper's 1st SS Panzer Regiment. Garrett related, "We knew they were SS and we had a fear of their reputation." The men soon had good reason to be afraid. "The Germans began going down the line taking our personal possessions, and I guess I called one of them a son of a bitch. He butt-stroked me across the mouth with his rifle and said, 'That will teach you to cross the Siegfried Line!'" Within moments, the situation turned deadly. "One of our officers, a captain I think, protested that the Germans were taking our men's watches. A German officer walked up to him, placed a pistol to his forehead and shot him right between the eyes."

The Germans herded the Americans into an open field near the main road to St. Vith. Garrett was standing several rows to the rear when a halftrack approached the front of the formation. "A German stood up in the open back of the halftrack, aimed a pistol at one of our men in the front rank – a medic, I recall, as he was wearing a helmet with a big red cross on it – and shot him dead." The men soon started milling about, but fearing that if they attempted to run the Germans would kill them all, the officers ordered them to stand fast. They could have saved their breath.

Moments later, German machine guns opened fire on the Americans, mowing them down. Garrett hit the dirt when the shooting

started and miraculously was not wounded. Lying for hours in the freezing field of corpses, he counted over 100 vehicles as they passed by – the German occupants frequently fired bullets into the bodies of the Soldiers. Although Garrett did not observe any Germans "finishing off" wounded Americans, other survivors of the massacre reportedly did witness such atrocities.

Finally, Garrett could lie still no longer for fear of freezing to death. Since it was nearly dark, he decided to attempt an escape. At that very moment, a GI called out that if anyone was still alive, now was the time to make a run for it. Garrett immediately bolted to the rear of the killing field and headed toward the woods.

After hiding for a while in a woodpile, Garrett made his way downhill through the forest to the American lines at Malmedy. However, his fellow Soldiers did not offer him a particularly warm reception. Spooked by rampant tales of German spies and saboteurs wearing GI clothing, the troops at Malmedy took no chances with Garrett and kept him under guard for several hours. Although indignant at being treated like an enemy, Garrett conceded, "At least it was warm and they gave me something hot to eat."

The incident at Baugnez Crossroads – tragically misnamed the "Malmedy Massacre" (Americans took revenge by dropping bombs on Malmedy, even though the town had remained in U.S. hands during the entire battle) – became controversial when Jochen Peiper and some of his men stood trial at Nuremberg for the murder of at least 71 American prisoners of war. Peiper's unit had in fact slaughtered as many as 400 people, leaving a trail of dead U.S. Soldiers and Belgian civilians strewn all along its bloody path. Known in the East as "the Blowtorch Battalion," the unit had recently transferred from the Russian Front and was likely operating in the same manner in which it had there.

Although death sentences were passed at the trial, defense accusations of brutality by U.S. guards and interrogators eventually led to political pressure that resulted in the sentences being commuted to prison terms. By 1956, Jochen Peiper – the last German convicted of the massacre – was set free. ★

Colonel (Ret) Jerry D. Morelock, Ph.D., is Editor in Chief of ARMCHAIR GENERAL.

MEMORIAL IMAGE COURTESY OF ARNO LASSE

Peiper's unit had in fact slaughtered as many as 400 people, leaving a trail of dead U.S. Soldiers and Belgian civilians strewn all along its bloody path.



CORBIS

Two American Soldiers are dug out of the snow at the scene of the Malmedy Massacre. As the bodies were uncovered, they were assigned a number to aid in the war crimes investigation.

The bodies of American Soldiers from Battery B, 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion lie in a snow-covered field at Baugnez Cross-roads near the Belgian town of Malmedy. Waffen SS troops murdered the men on December 17, 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge.



U.S. ARMY



CORBIS

While fighting in the Ardennes Forest in December 1944, German soldiers stop their vehicle near a road sign pointing to Malmedy.

Pvt. Eugene Garrett (second from right) and Cpl. "Dad" Conrad (right), along with three other former members of Battery B, 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion visit the massacre site in 1945.



EUGENE GARRETT



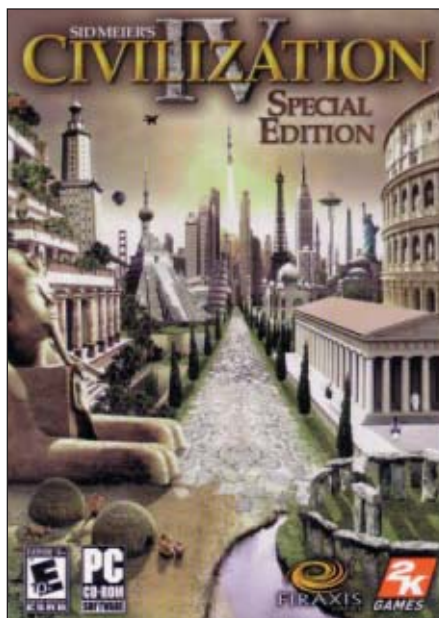
EUGENE GARRETT

Cpl. "Dad" Conrad, Battery B's oldest Soldier and massacre survivor, examines the rotting remains of a GI poncho he found during a 1945 visit to the site of the atrocity.

GAME BUZZ

So Many Games, So Little Time!

Here's a sneak peek at 10 new releases.



Civilization IV is the latest edition of Sid Meier's epic.

Combat Mission: Campaigns adds meaning to those tactical battles ... or at least adds fun.



BATTLEFRONT



Field Commander features turn-based tactical battles that fit in your pocket.

SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT

1

At the top of 2K Games' (2kgames.com) strategy list is the latest and greatest edition of *Civilization*, possibly the most famous turn-based strategy game of all time. *Civilization IV* features a true 3-D environment, streamlined play and the most varied "tech tree" ever. But that's not all. Players choose leaders for their empire, influence their colonies through one of seven religions, and watch military units become more deadly as they gain experience.

2

2K Games' (2kgames.com) *Vietcong 2* places players in either the boots of a young American captain or the sandals of a Vietcong private. The American campaign is composed of 14 first-person-shooter missions. Set against the backdrop of the 1968 Tet Offensive, the American leads a small fire-team of soldiers fighting to regain control of Vietnam's ancient capital, Hue. On the other hand, the Vietcong private protects his village from the South Vietnamese and eventually, as a young sergeant, leads his men in the assault on Hue. The game features down-and-dirty street combat, stunning visuals, drivable vehicles and over 50 authentic weapons.

3

Straight from Sony Online Entertainment – one of pop culture's biggest publishing giants – comes *Field Commander* (fieldcommander.station.sony.com), a turn-based strategy game for, of all things, the PlayStation Portable. As the power of computers and consoles grows, developers are be-

coming increasingly skittish about dropping the big bucks required to make graphically competitive games into poorly selling turn-based titles. Such isn't the case, however, in the handheld community. *Field Commander* is just one of a cornucopia of great strategy games coming out for handhelds within the next year. With a choice of 30 missions, players-turned-commanders can have a blast as they thrust their forces into a full 3-D environment and engage the enemy in turn-based tactical battles. While the units are fictitious, the types of units available – tanks, artillery, rocket launchers – are ripped from today's headlines. It's entertainment you can hold in the palm of your hand!

4

Ubisoft – the software publisher rapidly becoming the modern equivalent of SSI, Talonsoft and Microprose all rolled into one – brings us the flight simulation *Heroes of the Pacific* (heroesofthepacific.com). The game begins with Japan's raid on Pearl Harbor and throws the player into some of the most memorable battles of the Pacific campaign, including Wake Island, Midway and Coral Sea. Six game modes, 35 World War II aircraft – including Japan's famed Zero – and an intriguing story line make for a worthwhile diversion.

5

Codemasters' (codemasters.com) *Operation Flashpoint* makes its Xbox debut with *Operation Flashpoint: Elite*. While still a straight-up Cold War fight between the United States and the Soviet Union, *Elite* is not an unimaginative port of the PC

Field Commander is just one of a cornucopia of great strategy games coming out for handhelds within the next year.

game. Make no mistake, it's a whole new deal. Players control everything from their rifles to squads, tanks and helicopters. Great fun and great strategy.

6

Diplomacy made its name as an Avalon Hill boardgame of international intrigue that depicted the political maneuvering of early 20th-century Europe. Paradox (paradoxplaza.com) now brings that intrigue to the computer. Gamers may play solo against an eerily lifelike artificial intelligence, or multiplayer via LAN or online. *Diplomacy* ships with a sharp, in-game tutorial, cool graphical negotiation language and an online server with player rankings for folks who define their lives by their computer-gaming skills.

7

CDV's (cdv.de) real-time strategy game **American Conquest: Divided Nation** transports gamers back in time and drops them amidst the many competing factions of 19th-century America. No matter which character the player chooses – the leader of the Texas militia, a Civil War general or a commander in the Mexican army – guiding huge armies across massive 3-D landscapes in cinematic, real-time battles is loads of fun.

8

Rebelstar Tactical Command (namco.com/games/rebelstar/) is another superb example of a great turn-based game moving to the handheld machines. Developed by some of the people responsible for *X-Com: UFO Defense*, *Rebelstar* includes all the absorbing tactical battles of *X-Com* without the somewhat

tedious base building. Designed for the Gameboy Advance, *Rebelstar* features a spaceship full of tactical, turn-based battles pitting the good-guy humans against the bad-guy aliens. Action points, opportunity fire, cover, line of sight – it's all there. Better still, the game fits in your pocket!

9

In **Combat Mission: Campaigns**, from Battlefront.com (battlefront.com), players maneuver operational-level forces (up to division strength) on World War II's Eastern Front. When opposing armies meet, the combat resolves using the famed *Combat Mission: Barbarossa to Berlin* (CMBB) tactical game engine. *Campaigns* places the CMBB tactical battles in a broader context, thereby giving them more importance.

10

CDV's (cdv.de) **Blitzkrieg 2** takes up where its predecessor left off. In this gorgeous real-time strategy game, players lead the forces of the Soviet Union, Germany or the United States. *Blitzkrieg 2* boasts over 90 battles set in North Africa, Europe and the Eastern Front, and over 250 units with tanks such as the German King Tiger, the American Sherman "Easy Eight" and the Soviet KV-1.

That's it for now, folks. Until next time, check out our Game Sections and Game Resources links at armchairgeneral.com. ★

Mark H. Walker is a commander in the U.S. Navy Reserve. A veteran electronic entertainment/IT journalist and boardgame designer, he has authored or contributed to over 40 books and recently designed the critically acclaimed board wargame "Lock 'n Load."



CDV

Top: A Soviet tank platoon attacks in *Blitzkrieg 2*, a game with beautiful visuals.



PARADOX

Right: With *Diplomacy*, you can win Europe in only a couple of hours!



UBISOFT

Bottom: Cruising for prey in *Heroes of the Pacific*.

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VIDEO GAME REVIEW

ARMCHAIR GENERAL'S FIVE-STAR RATING SCALE:

★★★★★ = ACG'S HIGHEST RECOMMENDATION
★★★★ = EXCELLENT
★★★ = GOOD
★★ = BELOW AVERAGE
★ = NOT RECOMMENDED

Two Thrilling Games You Won't Want to Miss!

Ghost Recon 2: Summit Strike

I have a confession to make. After years of criticizing the interface, mission design and artificial intelligence of *Ghost Recon*, the game's Borg has finally assimilated me. Ubisoft got it right this time – *Ghost Recon: Summit Strike* is completely captivating.

This edition's Ghosts are embroiled in a hunt for Asad Rahil, a Pakistani terrorist who has created unrest in neighboring Kazakhstan. After assassinating the country's president, Rahil moves in his own troops to take control. NATO responds but is ineffective. Hence, the Ghosts

are called upon to save the day.

Eleven diverse missions make up the single-player campaign. You'll have a blast as you assault bases and towns, take out mobile artillery with shoulder-fired anti-tank rockets, and defend bunkers from hordes of attackers in the dead of night. Your team lends support in nine of the missions, but in the other two you must go it alone. For those who prefer it that way, Lone Wolf mode is available for all 11. When fighting by yourself, your rifle is equipped with a cool gun camera that allows you to not only look but also *shoot*

around corners. Additionally, you'll have plenty of artillery support. Just point the laser target designator at a problem, call the artillery and the problem goes away.

The artificial intelligence in *Summit Strike* is excellent, and the controlling commands are better than any of the previous editions. Just point to a location, press a button and your team moves there. Or target a helicopter/vehicle, press a button and a squad member draws the appropriate weapon and engages it.

A semi-realistic damage model allows you to take only a hit or two before buying the farm. There are no magical health "power ups"; however, the

Ghosts can bandage one another, which restores some lost power.

The game boasts 24 multiplayer modes, and each is a real crowd-pleaser on Xbox Live. Included are Helo Hunt, an attempt to down all AI-controlled helicopters; Co-op Hamburger Hill, a defense against waves of AI attackers; and Search and Rescue, a *Counterstrike: Source*-like challenge to rescue hostages held by the opposing team.

Summit Strike is the best *Ghost Recon* yet. Its combination of intuitive controls, enthralling single-player missions and numerous multiplayer modes makes it a must-have for squad-based, first-person shooter aficionados.

★

ARMCHAIR GENERAL

ACG RATES THIS GAME

★★★★★

● Released August 2005

● Rated Teen

● Developed by Red Storm

● Published by Ubisoft

● MSRP \$39.99

● Formatted for Xbox

GHOST RECON 2: SUMMIT STRIKE



Nothing is cooler than ambushing a helo from a city-street hideout.



An attack helicopter eagerly awaits an incoming surface-to-air missile in *Ghost Recon 2: Summit Strike*.

The interface – always the *Rainbow Six* series' strength – is as good as ever, and maybe even better.



Rainbow Six: Lockdown features wild gun battles.



Exciting indoor action abounds in *Lockdown*.



The sniper is a cool addition. Here, he drops a bad guy.



Rainbow Six: Lockdown

A recent addition to the long line of *Rainbow Six* titles, *Lockdown* throws Tom Clancy's multinational anti-terrorist team into the middle of yet another scheme for world domination. This time the bad guys have stolen a virus that could infect the entire planet and leave everyone looking like an extra on the set of *28 Days Later*.

Once again, you play the role of Domingo Chavez as he calls upon his usual cast of helping hands to assist him through the 14 available missions. From hostage rescues to terrorist take-downs, *Lockdown* offers a good deal of familiar fare. New, however, is the sniper mode that places you in the boots of Dieter Weber. Whether on a rooftop or hovering in a chopper, Dieter provides long-distance support as he takes out terrorist shooters, knocks back charging enemies, or just

adds firepower where needed.

The interface – always the *Rainbow Six* series' strength – is as good as ever, and maybe even better. As before, point to a location, press a button and the team moves there. When clearing a room, the team waits until you press a second button before entering the space, allowing you to use a different door to catch the terrorists from behind. This option has always been available, but with the new control scheme it is easier than ever to implement. Perhaps stealing a page from *Full Spectrum Warrior*, the game also allows you to target a corner to which your team will advance, halt, and then peek around the edge to check for Tangos. Pretty cool stuff!

In addition to a lethal cornucopia of weapons, the *Rainbow Six* team has at its disposal night vision and thermal sights with which to locate the stealthy ter-

rorists. And a new heartbeat sensor comes in handy for spotting the bad guys behind walls. (Red Storm and Ubisoft first used the sensor in *Shadow Watch*, one of the best turn-based, tactical shooters ever designed.)

The game's persistent role-playing mode, accessible only through Xbox Live, permits you to choose one of four character types – commando, medic, spec op or engineer – each with a particular talent. As *Lockdown* progresses, you earn experience that allows you to unlock new items and armor and repair current equipment. Nice concept.

Whether you prefer to lose yourself in the single-player campaign or go head-to-head with friends in one of the many multiplayer modes, *Lockdown* offers something for everyone's tastes. It is a solid addition to the franchise and one that any *Rainbow Six* fan will enjoy. ★

Mark H. Walker is a commander in the U.S. Navy Reserve. A veteran electronic entertainment/IT journalist and boardgame designer, he has authored or contributed to over 40 books and recently designed the critically acclaimed board wargame "Lock 'n Load."



ARMCHAIR GENERAL

ACG RATES THIS GAME



- Released September 2005
- Rated Mature
- Developed by Red Storm

- Published by Ubisoft
- MSRP \$39.99
- Formatted for Xbox, PS2 and GameCube

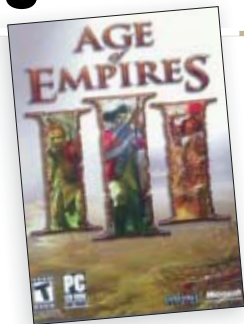
RAINBOW SIX: LOCKDOWN

WARGAME REVIEW

ARMCHAIR GENERAL'S FIVE-STAR RATING SCALE:

★★★★★ = ACG'S HIGHEST RECOMMENDATION
★★★★ = EXCELLENT
★★★ = GOOD
★★ = BELOW AVERAGE
★ = NOT RECOMMENDED

Age of Empires III



GAME STATS:

MSRP \$49.99

PUBLISHER WEBSITE

microsoft.com/games/pc/age3.aspx

DEVELOPER WEBSITE

ensemblestudios.com

PLATFORM/PC SPECS Processor:

1.4 GHz; OS: XP; Memory: 256 MB

RAM; Video Card: 64 MB with support for transformation and lighting

Age of Empires III is a real-time strategy game spanning the discovery of the New World from the 16th to the 18th centuries. You take control of one of eight civilizations' forces and then explore, colonize and finally attempt to conquer the New World. As the campaign unfolds, you encounter colorful landscapes, pirates, wild creatures, and natives who can become either allies or enemies. All the while, you expand settlements, collect resources and produce units, eventually building a capable military force. The fast pace makes for edge-of-your-seat excitement as you research tech-



MICROSOFT SOFTWARE

nology and send your troops into fascinating, freewheeling battles. *Age of Empires III* brings history to life with vivid action, requiring you to think on your feet as you mobilize and mass military forces to achieve victory. The end result is challenging and fun.



ARMCHAIR GENERAL

ACG RATES THIS GAME

DIFFICULTY (EASY, MEDIUM, HARD) **Easy**

TIME TO LEARN

Approximately 30 minutes

FAVORITE FAN SITE

agecommunity.com

MOST EXCITING ASPECT

Combat animations – watching things blow up

BEST SCENARIO

The rescue

MULTIPLAYER

Yes, two versions available

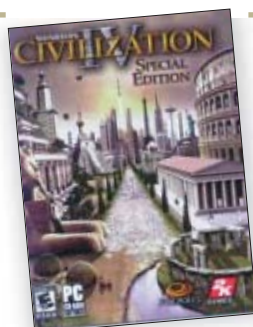
FAVORITE UNIT/WEAPON

Heavy cannon

BEST REASON TO BUY

Fast-paced action in a colorful historical setting

AGE OF EMPIRES III

SID MEIER'S
Civilization IV

GAME STATS:

MSRP \$49.99

PUBLISHER WEBSITE

2kgames.com/civ4

DEVELOPER WEBSITE

firaxis.com

PLATFORM/PC SPECS Processor:

1.8 GHz; OS: XP or 2000; Memory:

512 MB RAM; Video Card: 128 MB

with Direct X8 support

Encompassing the advance of human history from ancient times to the near future, the scope of *Civilization IV* deals with far more than just war and conquest. To achieve your goals, you must manage the subtle interplay of religion, government, economics and technological advances. Concepts such as cultural influence exert a critical effect upon the conquering armies. As it is turn-based, *Civilization IV* allows you to proceed at your own pace, giving you time to study the game's many intricacies. While complex, it provides vast amounts of information to shorten the learning curve. High-quality graphics, a streamlined interface, and multiple victory conditions endow the game with endless replay value. Sid



2K GAMES

Spanish swordsmen battle
Chinese troops in *Civilization IV*.

Meier's *Civilization IV* is a highly recommended and addictive gaming adventure. ★

Lieutenant Colonel (Ret)

Jeffrey Paulding is a lifelong student of military history and science. He has been playing wargames since the age of nine.



ARMCHAIR GENERAL

ACG RATES THIS GAME

DIFFICULTY (EASY, MEDIUM, HARD) **Medium**

TIME TO LEARN

Approximately 1.5 hours

FAVORITE FAN SITE

civfanatics.com

MOST EXCITING ASPECT

Unprecedented scope combined with additive game play

BEST SCENARIO

The single-player campaign

MULTIPLAYER

Yes, online and play by e-mail

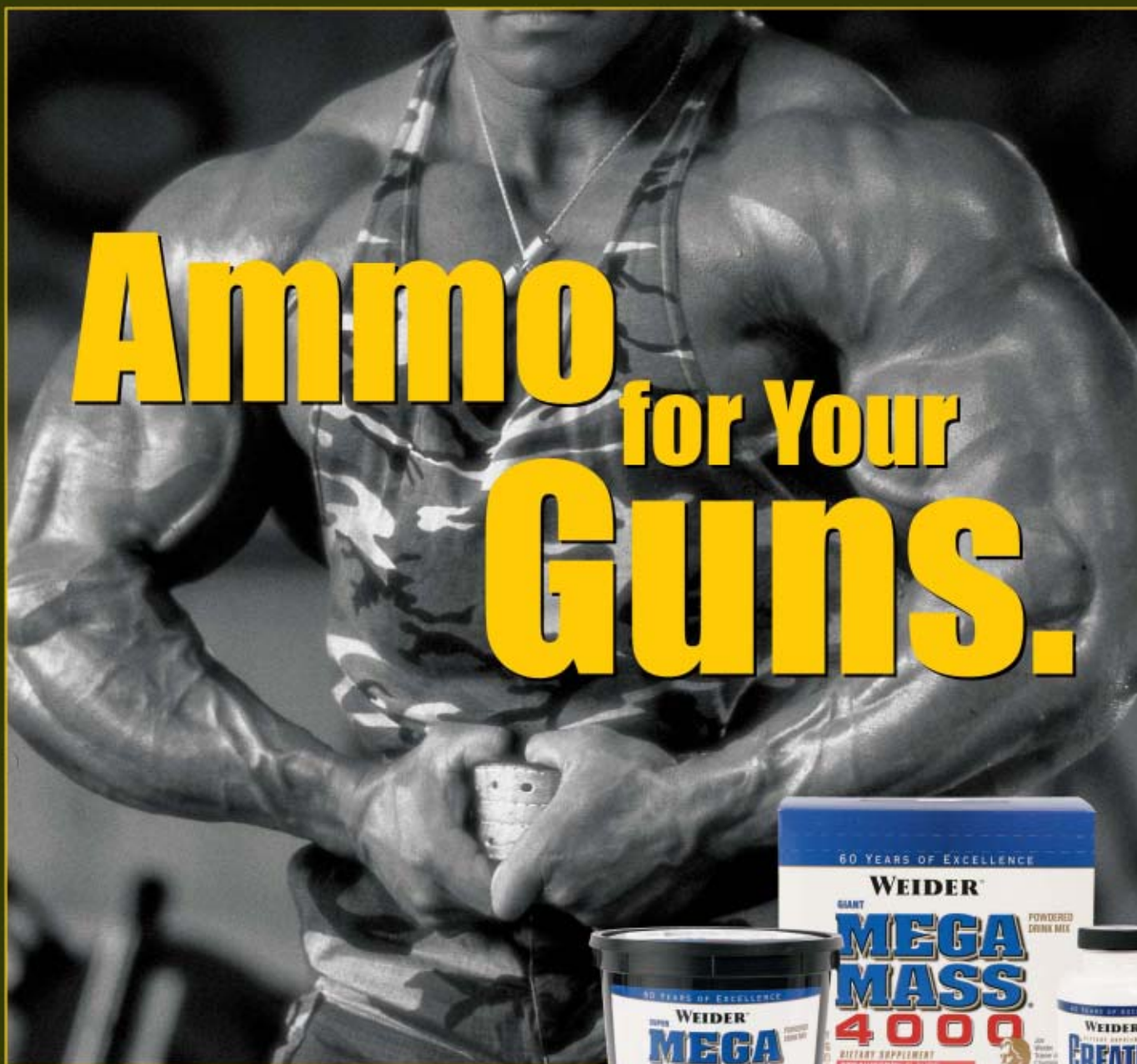
FAVORITE UNIT/WEAPON

War elephants

BEST REASON TO BUY

For the fun of mastering the strategies that underlie the story of civilization

SID MEIER'S CIVILIZATION IV



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★★★★★ = ACG'S HIGHEST RECOMMENDATION
★★★★ = EXCELLENT
★★★ = GOOD
★★ = BELOW AVERAGE
★ = NOT RECOMMENDED

Inside the Wire: DVDs Capture the Prisoner of War Experience

While World War II is clearly Hollywood's favorite era for POW films, critics – including those at *Armchair General* – still rank Jean Renoir's classic World War I tale at the top of this crowded category. With online retailers offering these great movies at budget prices ranging from \$7 (*Andersonville*) to \$36 (*Grand Illusion*), there's never been a better time to stock your DVD library!

Grand Illusion (1937)

★★★★★

Director Jean Renoir
Criterion Collection
Released 1998
Unrated

Eric von Stroheim's German jailer steals the show in Renoir's groundbreaking film about World War I French POWs.

Bridge on the River Kwai (1957) ★★★★★

Director David Lean
Columbia-TriStar
Released 2000
Rated PG

Lean's fictional account of British prisoners building the doomed bridge on Japan's infamous Burma Railway earned seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Actor (Alec Guinness).

Stalag 17 (1953) ★★★★★

Director Billy Wilder
Paramount
Released 1999
Rated Approved

William Holden won Best Actor for his portrayal of the cynical Sergeant Sefton in this powerful movie about Americans in a Nazi POW camp searching for a traitor in their midst. Otto Preminger's camp commandant is also superb.

The Great Escape (1963)

★★★★★

Director John Sturgis
Columbia Tri-Star Home Video
Released 1998
Unrated

Japanese guards. Postwar reconciliation is a surprising twist.

Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence (1983) ★★★★★

Director Nagisa Oshima
Universal

Willis) clash while in a German camp. Nazi brutality, American racism, a murder trial and a secret escape plan enliven the plot.

Paradise Road (1997) ★★★

Director Bruce Beresford
20th Century Fox
Released 2001
Rated R

This true story of Western women surviving Japanese captivity portrays the enemy as "equal opportunity abusers." Glenn Close, Cate Blanchett, Pauline Collins and Frances McDormand head the strong international cast.

Empire of the Sun (1987) ★★★

Director Steven Spielberg
Warner Home Video
Released 2001
Rated PG

A British boy (Christian Bale) interned by the Japanese at Shanghai learns adult survival skills from a cynical American adventurer (John Malkovich) during their four years as prisoners.

Andersonville (1996) ★★★

Director John Frankenheimer
Warner Home Video
Released 2003
Unrated

Union Soldiers experience the horror and misery of disease, starvation, murderous guards and predatory prisoner gangs in a deadly Confederate prison camp.

The Great Raid (2005) ★★★

Director John Dahl
Miramax Home Entertainment
Released December 2005
Rated R

Based on a true story, *The Great Raid* (2005) depicts the 6th Ranger Battalion's daring attempt to rescue American prisoners at the infamous Cabanatuan Japanese POW camp.



The Great Escape starring Steve McQueen

Steve McQueen heads an all-star cast in this U.S. blockbuster hit. The film, however, ruffled some feathers in England – the real-life "great escape" was a nearly all-British affair.

To End All Wars (2001)

★★★★★

Director David L. Cunningham
Fox Home Entertainment
Released 2004
Rated R

This true story of Scottish soldiers captured at Singapore realistically depicts the abuse routinely inflicted upon Allied POWs by their

Released 2002

Rated R

Oshima explores the mindset and experiences of British POWs and their captors. Performances by Tom Conti (Colonel Lawrence), David Bowie (Jack Celliers) and Ryuichi Sakamoto (Captain Yonoi) stand out.

Hart's War (2002) ★★★

Director Gregory Hoblit
MGM/UA Video
Released 2002
Rated R

Lieutenant Hart (Colin Farrell) and Colonel McNamara (Bruce

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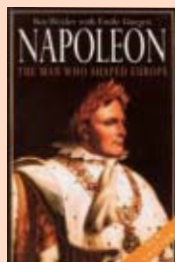
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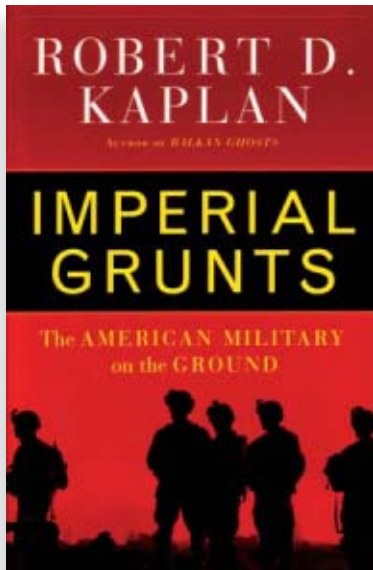
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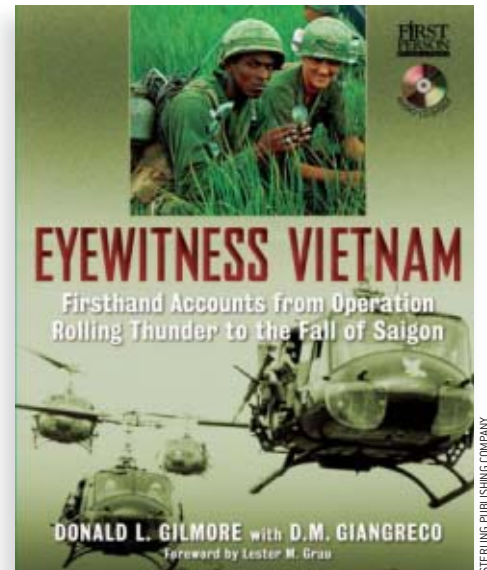
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BOOKSHELF



WAR, UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Two new must-have books transport readers directly to the front lines.



Imperial Grunts: The American Military on the Ground by Robert D. Kaplan, Random House (randomhouse.com)

Robert Kaplan, a widely traveled correspondent for *The Atlantic Monthly* and author of several groundbreaking books, including the watershed *Balkan Ghosts*, has produced yet another outstanding work. *Imperial Grunts* presents readers with an inside look at the world of America's front-line warriors who, as he notes, see themselves simply as "old-fashioned American nationalists."

Given unprecedented access to the troops and armed with his unique gift for gaining their trust and confidence, Kaplan circled the globe alongside Marines and U.S. Army Special Forces as they traveled to hot spots such as Afghanistan, Iraq and countless other locales. His insightful and compelling account probes far deeper than the vapid, superficial reporting of today's mainstream media. "I lived with these guys,"

he explains. "I didn't just stick a mike in their face and file a story."

Few, if any, of Kaplan's colleagues have ever been able to establish the same level of mutual respect, frank honesty and genuine trust that he shares with his subjects. The rapport between Kaplan and the troops is something that has rarely been seen since the legendary Ernie Pyle lived – and ultimately died – with his beloved GIs in World War II. Like Pyle, Kaplan truly cares about these "imperial grunts." In this new must-have book, the grunts are not merely background props decorating some reporter's story; they *are* the story.

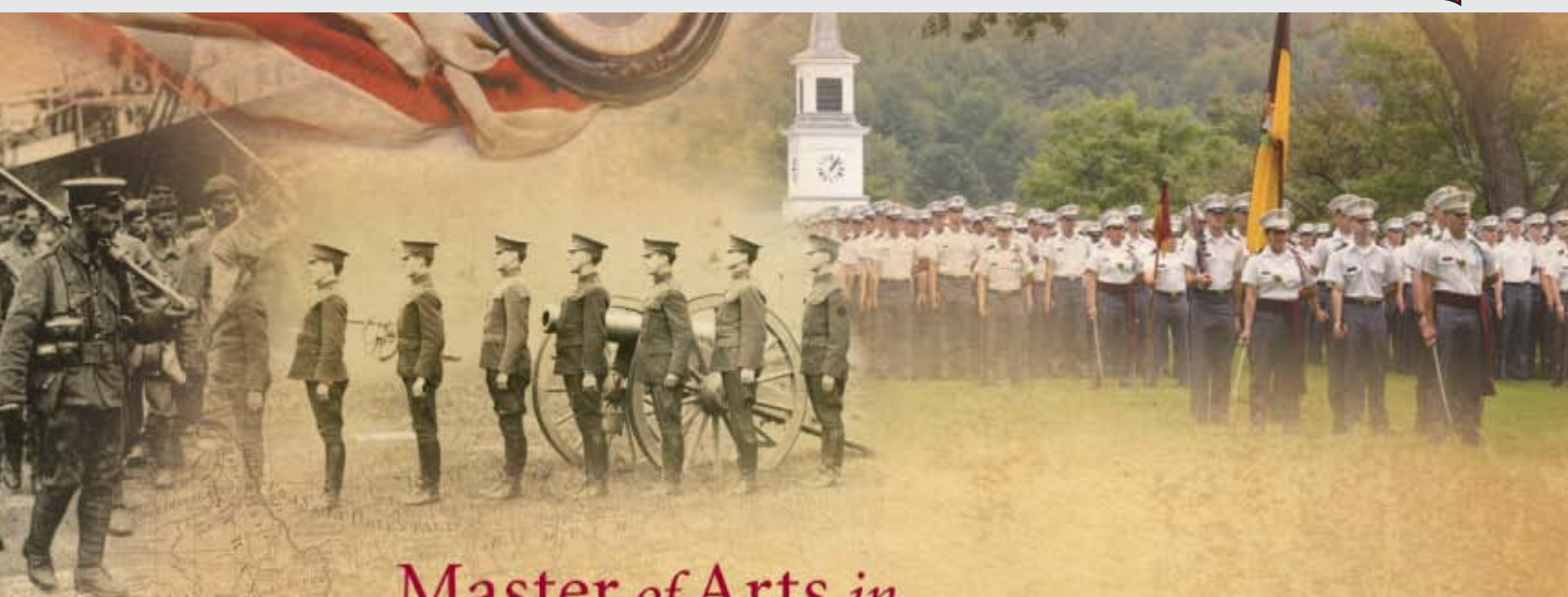
Eyewitness Vietnam: Firsthand Accounts From Operation Rolling Thunder to the Fall of Saigon by Donald L. Gilmore with D.M. Giangreco, Sterling Publishing Company (sterlingpub.com)

For anyone who has ever wondered what it was like to serve in Vietnam, here is an excellent new book chock-full of first-person accounts, many from Medal of Honor recipients. The widely varied aspects of the war documented in these personal stories may surprise readers whose knowledge of Vietnam is limited to watching scenes from movies such as *Platoon* and *Full Metal Jacket*. *Eyewitness Vietnam* confirms that there was no single "Vietnam experience" and that the nature of the war itself changed significantly during the 10 years America fought there.

Expertly written by Donald

L. Gilmore, formerly of the U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute (the history department of the Army's staff college), with the participation of Dennis M. Giangreco of *Military Review* magazine, *Eyewitness Vietnam* has a real "you are there" feel to it. Maps and over 250 photographs – some previously unpublished – supplement the text and help place readers right in the middle of the action. A bonus CD with the actual recorded words of several eyewitnesses adds to the feeling of authenticity. This book is highly recommended for anyone interested in learning what it was *really* like to serve in America's longest war.

These personal stories may surprise readers whose knowledge of Vietnam is limited to watching scenes from movies such as *Platoon* and *Full Metal Jacket*.



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PARTING SHOT



The King Visits the “Front”

The pristine condition of the trench and the proliferation of canes and swagger sticks (instead of rifles and machine guns) is a telling indication that George V's trip to “the front in France” in this recently discovered WWI photograph took him nowhere near the actual fighting lines. This neat, dry and immaculately sandbagged model is a far cry from the waterlogged, mud-filled and blood-soaked trenches at the real front,

which the king (sixth from the left) never saw.

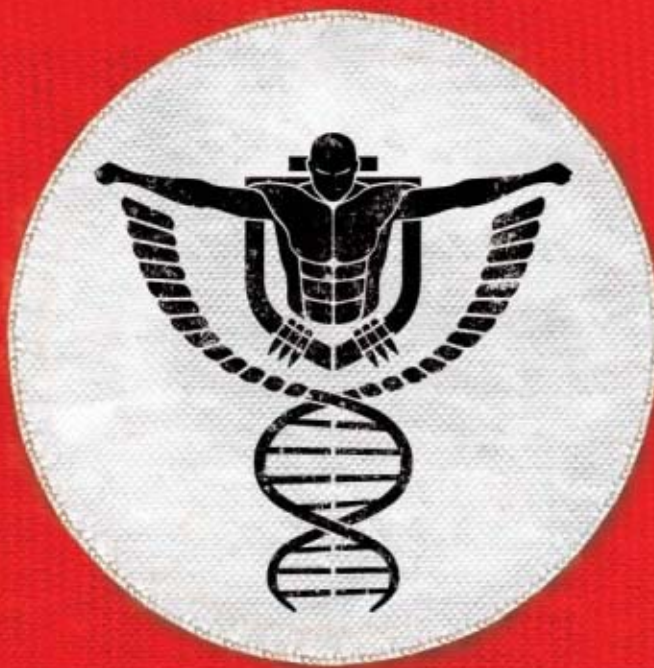
When senior officers witnessed the horror this mock trench purported to represent, the shocking sight prompted comments such as the one in 1917 from Lieutenant General Sir Lancelot Kiggell, who burst into tears crying, “Good God, did we really send men to fight in that?” Sadly, Kiggell's escort officer replied that the trenches farther ahead were far worse. ★

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